

The Triall of a
CHRISTIANS
Sincere
LOVE
UNTO
CHRIST.

By Mr. WILLIAM PINKE
Mr. of Arts, late Fellow of
Magdalen Colledge in
OXFORD.

Ο ἑμὸς ἔργος ἐσὶν ὁ Χριστός. 1g. Ep.
ad Rom.

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To The
H O N O U R A B L E
A N D T R U L Y

Noble Lord, the Lord
G E O R G E D I G B Y,

*Sonne and Heir of the Right Ho-
nourable the Earle of Bristoll.*

*Right Honourable and my
very Good Lord,*

TH A T I have presumed to
present to your Lordships
Patronage these few Ser-
mons of a deceased wor-
thy friend, it is not so much the
acknowledgment of those great
favours and noble respects, where-
with you were pleased to grace
Him, and since his death have
vouchsafed to extend to mee
your unworthy servant, but
due consideration (if in Deed

The Epistle

tions matchableness be to be regarded) how properly and peculiarly they doe belong to your Lordship both in respect of the Authour and the Argument. The Authour was one, whom, for his singular dexterity in the Arts, depth of judgement, sharpnesse of wit, and especially his skill in languages, Hebrew, Greek, Arabick, you were pleased to make choice of for one of your Readers during your abode at *Magdalen Colledge in Oxon*; in which time you so obliged him by the abundant testimonies of your good affection to him, that He oft professed to me how great and just an interest your merits claimed in all his studies and labours. This which you here see is but an Essay to some master-piece which you might have expected, if he had lived to finish what he attempted

Dedictory.

attempted in the Greek Antiquities,
and observations on the Hebrew
Text. For the matter, it being a
Theame of the weightiest busi-
nesse in Christianity, the ground-
worke of all; which if it be not
first rooted in the heart; all other
of our conclusions and speculations
in Divinity will be but like the
building a Castle in the aire, and
may give the soule content per-
haps, of a rare speculation, but
cannot of a powerfull, experient
all, soule-quickning, and soule sav-
ing Religion. The Argument, I
say, being such, as I could not har-
den my self against the requests of
some, who desired the publishing
thereof, for the good many soules
might reap by it, so neither could
I think any fitter to Patronize
Theam of piety, than one who
shewed himself amongst us, both
Patron and an Example of it.

would be as farre from flattery, as
 you are from the want of it ; and
 I would not, you should look your
 self in a false Glasse: overweening in
 any man , is a thing that exposeth
 to secret contempt, whensoever
 the weaknesse shall be espied ; but
 Great men so much the more, by
 how much they are the more ob-
 served, and have occasion oftner
 to come upon the stage. You re-
 member what manner of man he
 was, serious in his studies, devout
 and strict in an holy conversation,
 the things you loved in him, and
 imitated : A singular Omen, when
 Noble men begin betimes to be
 countenancers of goodnesse and
 good men : so persevere to do like
 a good *Obadiab* * the Church
 shall blesse you, and God shall ho-
 nour you, * For those that honour
 him, he will honour, and them that
 despise him, he will cover with
 shame,

* 1 King.

18.

* 1 Sam.

2. 30.

7, as *same*, either by bringing on them
 and some notable judgement, or by
 our giving them up to such headlong
 in courses and filthy vices, whereby
 their honour shall be stained, their
 estates wasted, themselves and
 but their posterity ruined (it being not
 by unusuall with God to punish men
 ob- by their own devices and sinnes
 ner wherein they delight.) And so
 re- doth your Lordship persevere to
 he do, I will not load your mode-
 out sty with a slender report of your
 on, own worth: What perhaps I ought
 nd to say, your Lordship may guesse
 ren by what the people doe say of
 be you, and what I should commend
 nd unto you (if I were able or wor-
 ke thy) by what the world expects
 ch from you: I know there is nothing
 o- more vaine then to live by opi-
 ur nion, by what men say or expect;
 at opinion is but an ill rule & gover-
 th nesse of our lives and actions, (an-
 e,

other mans measure being too
long, or too short for me) yet this
use we may make of it; when men
begin to applaud and take notice
of that which our selves have the
greatest reason to study and affect;
it may serue to raise our vertues
to an higher pitch; than our own
privacy could lightly bring them;
the love and practise of any good
increasing with the acceptance it
findes abroad: But I forget what
I have in hand, I close all with ap-
preciation of all happiness to your
Lordship: the God of Joseph
double upon you the blessings of
Joseph: * Blessed be him make you
for the precious things of Heauen,
and of the deep that coucheth be-
neath, for the precious things of the
Earth, and the fulnesse thereof: but
especially, for the good will of him,
that dwelt in the Bush; Doe worthily
in Ephratah; * and be you famous
in

* Deut.
33. 13, 16

* Ruth.
4. 11.

in your Israel: The seed of vertue
and pious education, wherewith
your tender years have been sea-
soned, let them budde and yeeld
their pleasant and wholesome fruit
in their seasons. I still trespasse.
Moneo, quod facis

Virg.
Æn. 9.

*Spondes digna tuis ingentibus
omnia captis.*

Shirburn. July. 7.

1639.

Your Lordships humble and
devoted servant.

WILLIAM LYFORD.

A 5

To

To the Reader.

Courteous Reader : I here present thee with some pieces and fragments of an entire and just discourse intended by the Author, concerning that usefull and worthy Argument, the sincerity and triall of a Christians love to Christ: It was the glory of the last age, that among other miracles, God blessed it with the resurrection of Learning; it being a time, wherein lived and flourished men famous for learning and piety, who sent abroad into the world many large volumes for the vindicating of Gods true Religion and worship from Barbarisme, Errour, and Superstition: And 'tis] a part of the happinesse of this our Age, that (beside the same truth still maintained) it hath sent forth many famous Treatises concerning the nature of faith, the power and practise

Use of Religion. Amongst which,
this would not have been of the least
note, if the Author himself had lived
to finish it: A continuation and
perfecting whereof, I cannot hope for
from others, much lesse dare I pre-
sume to attempt it my self, as ever
loathing that solecisme,

Hor. Art. Poet.

— ut turpiter atrum

Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne.

Take therefore these Sermons as they
were delivered, and left by him:
What is done in them I had rather
should appear to thy judgement in
the serious reading, then from my
opinion of them: only let me intreat
thee to read them with the same spi-
rit they were written (for that's
the way to profit by other mens
works) and content not thy self to
trifle away some odde hours in them,
but reserve them to some of thy most
retired

retired thoughts and severest meditations, so maist thou by Gods blessing finde something to strengthen the assurances of thy hopes by Christ, and to encrease thy future care and love to sincerity. In which respects, if they profit any, into whose hands they come, I shall lesse blame the importunity of some, who for that cause earnestly desired them, and the lesse regard the censure of others, who may haply mislike the publishing of them. As his conversation was sweet, so is his memory pretious, to me as to any other: Neither can I think it any way stained by the service of love, wherein I chose rather to give life to some things of His, than that all should die with him. All the good be thine, and all the Glory, Gods. Farewell.

Thine in the truest
Bond,

23 AD 62 W. Lyford.

I Cor. 16. V. 22.

If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maran-atha.

S Aint Paul being now to close up his Epistle to the Corinthians, and having thus far used the help of a Scribe; is willing to give them the farewell salutation in his own hand-writing: The salutation of me Paul with my own hand, in the verse before my Text. His salutation in this as in all the rest of his Epistles is a solemn Apostolicall benediction, wishing them the grace and favour of God in Jesus Christ, in the verse following my Text. But now knowing too well how many false brethren there were at Corinth, who were content

The misery of those that professe Christ for outward carnall respects.

tent indeed to professe Christ for some outward carnall respects, but did grossely dissemble with him in their hearts, least such should misapply this comfortable salutation unto themselves, least such dogs should imagine these holy things to be given them, he salutes them after another manner, and prevents their presumption by this terrible, thundring execration: *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.*

This Text is somewhat obscure by reason of the strang words which are in it, which (setting aside all curiosity) I will unfold as nakedly as I can, that I may in few words lay open a plain way to the sense and instructive matter of this Scripture. The word *Anathema* is a Greek word: in English it signifies *Accursed*:
The

The words *Maran-atha* are Syriack, and signify in English, *Our Lord commeth*. That the full meaning of the holy Ghost in the use of these words may more cleerly be conceived by you; you are to be advertised that in this Text there is an allusion unto the Jewish manner of Excommunication, which was twofold. 1. The first kinde of it called *Niddui*, was only a separation for a time, commonly for thirty dayes, from all commerce or society with any man within a certain distance. This thought to be that which is called in the New Testament, a casting out of the Synagogue. 2. The second more severe and terrible then the former was, when a scandalous offender with curses out of the Law of *Moses* was in the publike audience of the whole Church, without any limitation of

The interpretation of the words *AnatHEMA Ma-ran-atha*.

The Jewish manner of excommunication is twofold.

of time, excluded from the communion of it. This is thought to be that which is called in the New Testament, a delivering up unto Sathan. This in Hebrew *Cherem*, in Greek is called *Anathema*, which word you have in the Text. This *Anathema* was twofold. 1. Simple, when what I have now mentioned was performed. 2. With an addition, *Anathema Maran-atha*, when besides all other maledictions out of the Law, they added this clause, *Our Lord commeth*: By which forme the excommunicated person, as desperate and quite forsorne, without all hope of pardon or restitution, was left into the hands of the Lord to receive from him an heavy doom at his coming. This then being applied unto my Text, the sense runnes thus: If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed, and

A two-
fold A-
nathema.

The
meaning
of the
Text.

and that in the most desperate
manner, expecting due vengeance
from the Lord when hee com-
meth *in vngodly vsias*, with his
holy millions to execute judgement
upon all, and to convince all that
are ungodly, as it is Enochs Prophe-
sie recorded by S. Jude, to which
this last degree of excommunica-
tion *Maran-atha* (or as the Sy-
rians pronounce it) *Moran-etho*,
our Lord commeth, may proba-
bly seem to have speciall reference.
If any man &c. By any man, un-
derstand any man that lives in the
light of the Gospell, that pro-
fesses and thinks himself a Chri-
stian; for to such S. Paul directs
his speech; if any man thus qua-
lified love not Christ Jesus let
him be accursed in the highest de-
gree. It cannot be expected that
such as sit in the darknesse of Gen-
tilisme should love that Christ
whom

whom they have not heard : and therefore albeit their case be lamentable , because they hear of no Saviour, yet sure theirs is farre more fearfull , who hear him daily preaching in their streets , and take little notice of him , but neglect him and trample him under foot. *If any man love not* : some imagine an Hebraisme to lye couched in these words, *Love not*, supposing the sense to be , if any man hate ; and indeed this is the sense , but in my weak judgement the conceit of an Hebraisme is needlesse , seeing that as our Saviour tells us, *Luk. 11. 23. He that is not with him, is against him* ; and questionlesse whosoever professes his name, and yet loves him not, he hates him at the very heart. But if my conjecture deceive me not , my Text may receive excellent light from *Ephes. 6. v. ult. Grace*
be

be with all them, that love our Lord Jesus Christ in ἀκαταμίαν, in purity or sincerity. I suppose those whom Saint Paul curses in my Text, to be directly opposed to those whom he there blesses; and seeing to the Ephesians he blesses those, who loved Christ with an uncorrupt, unmixed, unfained love, it's likely that in my Text he bestowes his imprecations upon those, who make great shewes of love unto Christ with their mouthes, but undervalue and despise him in their hearts.

The Text being thus explained (not to mangle it with an unnecessary division) affords this materiall Doctrine. Whosoever he be, that professes himself a Christian, and thinks himself verily to be so, and yet hath not the love of Christ Jesus kindled and settled in his heart, is in a most dangerous

8 *The triall of a Christians.*

gerous and cursed estate.

Great variety of Reasons and proofs might be produced for the enlargement and confirmation of this point: those which I intend to make use of, I will reduce unto two general considerations, which will sufficiently manifest both how fearfully and how justly he stands accursed, who professing Christ Jesus with his mouth, entertaineth him not with his best affections in his heart. 1. My first consideration is this, that whosoever hath not imbraced Christ Jesus with the sweetest union of real love, hath no part in him, and therefore all the curses of the Law stand in full force against him: I shall not need to insist upon the aggravation of the wofull condition of him who is yet in bondage to the Law. Marke, I beseech you, the exquisite rigour of it,

com.

comprised in that one sentence,
Deut. 27. 26. Gal. 3. 10. *Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them.* O then how infinitely accursed are all of us naturally, who on the contrary, have continued in the violation of all things which are written in it. I am perswaded (howsoever some proud heretiques of these times have prated) that there is no man so stupid, or senselesse of the misse of being tried by the Law without any appeal unto the Gospel, but in his serious moodes when God shall in some measure awake his conscience he will confesse it had been better for him never to have been borne, then that God without the mediation of his Son should call him to a punctuall account for the most harmelesse and unoffensive day of his whole life.

Now

The
wofull
estate of
him to
whom
the Law
shall be
a Judge.

10 *The triall of a Christians*

Now what can a man have to comfort and secure his soule in these sad meditations but this, that God is superabundantly mercifull, in so much that *he sent his own Son to redeem us from the curse of the Law, and to be made a curse for us, Gal. 3. 13.* These indeed are heavenly consolations, & such as never faile those who are rightly qualified for them: But now they appertain not to such as love not Christ Jesus, to such as know not how to value and worthily esteeme the glorious purchases of his passion. It's true; God is mercifull infinitely above all finite conceit, but so is he just too: Magnifie his mercy as long as thou wilt thou canst never do it enough, but when all is done, thou maist say as much for his justice; as *S. Paul, Rom. 11. 22.* equally admires the goodnesse and severity of God. Who-

Gods
mercy
exclu-
deth not
his just-
ice.

Whosoever he be then, who looks for mercy from God without Christ, who only hath satisfied his justice, dreames not so much to finde God mercifull as to find him unjust. Now to come neerer to the point, can any man bee so sottish, or impudently presumptuous, as to hope to fare the better for Christ, who sees nothing desirable in him? Who is so far from *counting all things dung*, that hee may winne him, as *S. Paul* did, *Phil. 3. 8.* that he even prefers dung, the basest trash and vanities of the world before him? Is it likely that he should have any relief from the Gospell, who is so far from *counting all things losse for the excellency of the knowledge contained in it*, as *S. Paul* did, that he can tast no such excellency in it, that he should loose one farthing, forbear one pleasure, forgoe one vanity for it,

They can have no benefit by Christ who preferre pleasure or profit before him.

Our

Our Saviour himself, *Matth. 10. 37.* expressly tells us, *He that loveth Father or Mother more then me is not worthy of me*, that is, who-soever loves what he hath best reason to love in this life more then his Saviour, is not worthy to have any benefit by him, to have any share in his merits; What then think we, can they expect from him, who are so coldly affected towards him, that they preferre every trifle before him? *All the promises of God* (saith the Apostle) *2 Cor. 1. 20. in him* (in Christ Jesus) *are yea, and in him Amen*, that is, sure and infallible. But still in Christ Jesus. And what's this to any man if he himself be not in him? And how can he be in him but by loving him. The accursed estate of the false-hearted Christian, who presumes upon Christ, whom indeed he hath

hath nothing to do with , will more affright him if he would but consider it in other men.

Who is there amongst us but will much pittie and bemoane the lamentable condition of the poor Indians , and other Savages of the unchristian world , whose soules are overclouded with the blackest mists of irreligion, that the Prince of darknesse can possibly inwarp them , who come into the World knowing not wherefore , and go out of it dreaming not whither, but live here a while without God in the World, and then go to the generation of their Fathers, where they *shall never see the light* , to use the words of the Psalmist , *Psalm.*

49. 19. A heavy case indeed beyond all expression of a Tragedy , and which cannot be sufficiently bewailed with an ocean of tears of blood. But now who so ever he

The lamentable condition of the savage Indians,

A formall Christian is in as bad a case in

respect
of the
world
to come
as the
fillic In-
dian.

be within the Paradise of the Christian Church, who hath nothing to distinguish him from these miscreants but his outward conformity to the laws and customes of the place where he lives, who hath nothing to prove himself a Christian but outward formalities, the charity of other men, and his own slight imaginations; whosoever he be that hath not as yet espied something in Christ Jesus so amiable, as that in earnest it may challenge his whole heart before all the pompe and pleasure in the World, I say that man whosoever he be may keep his moanes and teares for himself: it's his own case: for, for the present, untill the spirit of grace shall startle him unto more sense of the mercies of Christ, he is in as bad a case as the fillicst Indian: I mean in respect of the world to come, for in
this

this life the most dissembling Christian is partaker of many sweet blessings which the Gospell uses to carry about with it from countrey to countrey, by which it civillizeth and polisheth the most rude and barbarous nations. But for the joyes of eternity, what better claime can he lay unto them then the wild American? He hath no more to do with Christ then the other. He hath lived indeed where he hath heard much talke of Christ, of redemption, and the glorious liberty of the Sonnes of God; but what's all this to him who could never relish any of these things, who never took them to heart, never could find any sweetnesse in them, but passed them over like some uncouth my-
 sticall fables? Beloved, we must not think that living within the myre of the Gospell, amongst

It is a pure sincere love of Christ that distinguisheth us from Infidels,

Churches and Bibles, can distinguish us from Infidels, exempt us from the rigour of the law, and entitle us to Christ? No such matter. *Christ came unto his own, but his own received him not, saith S. John*: were his own then ever the better for him? Not a whit. Our Saviour whilest he was talking with the Jewes, *Joh. 3. 40.* tels them, *Ye will not come unto me that yee might have life.* He was come unto them, but they would not come unto him. Albeit then Christ visit us never so frequently, if we welcome him not with that joy with which *Zacheus* once did, though he passe never so often by our hearts if we invite him not in, and get him to sup and lodge with us, we must look to get no more by him then those unhappy miscreants, who never heard of his name. It's considerable to his

pur-

purpose which S. Paul hath, Gal. 5. 6. *In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing, but faith which worketh by love*, that is, outward markes or priviledges advantage a man nothing in Christ Jesus, unlesse he be so sensibly perswaded of those miracles of compassion which Christ hath performed for his soul, that upon this perswasion he thinks he can never love him enough and therefore submits his whole soul unto him in a universall obedience unto his will.

To draw towards a conclusion of this point, let us scann a little, Psalm 2. 12. *Kisse the Son least he be angry and ye perish from the way*, and this Psalme contains a cleer prophecy of our Saviour, & such great ones of the World, as should oppose themselves against him, whom yet the Prophet

An explanation
of Psal. 2.
Kisse the
Son &c.

vouchsafeth to direct, V. 10. For all this they might make their peace with God: the chief part of the direction is set down in the words which you have now heard *Kisse the Sonne*, that is, reverence, respect; embrace the Sonne of God. Why so? Least by his *anger* ye perish from the way, from what way? The Syriack interpreter tells you *men urketh*, from his way. He himself is the onely way unto his Father, to whom *no man cometh but by him*, as himself tells us in the Gospell. Whosoever therefore stands off from Christ Jesus, and strives not to kisse, that is, to be united unto him by the choicest twinnes of dearest affection, must needs perish out of the way to life, continue still in his sinnes, expecting all the curses of the Law to fall upon him. *The Law was our Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ,*
faith

saith the Apostle , *Gal. 3. 24.*
 What to bring us within the
 sound of his name ? To bring us
 to talke and discourse of him ?
 More then so , to amaze us with
 the terrour of our sins , and to
 make us feel what need we have
 of a Saviour , and having one of-
 fered us , to lay fast hold on him
 whatsoever it cost us, and to prize
 him above all the Jewels in the
 world. But if the Law cannot pre-
 vaile so much with us as to make
 us groan for a redemer , to make
 us come crouching under our
 burdens unto Christ Jesus , we
 must continue still under the lash.
 It's true which the Apostle hath
 v. seq. that *after faith is come we*
are no longer under a Schoolmaster:
 But if this faith which is insepara-
 bly joyned with love never come,
 we are sure to smart under his
 heavy hand through all eternity.

You have heard the first part of his burden, who in the light of the Gospell does not really love Christ Jesus, to wit, that he has no part in Christ & therefore all the curses of the law belong unto him. One would think there needed no more to be said to prove him accursed, who loves not Christ Jesus, seeing his having no part in him includes more horours and terrours then it's possible for the brain of man to shape the Idea's of. But I must tell you, that as heavy a doome as this is, yet is it but light in comparison of which I shall describe unto you in a second consideration, to wit, who-soever he be that is Catechized and brought up in the Christian profession, and yet doth not heartily and sincerely affect Christ Jesus, besides all the curses due unto his sins against the Law, he treasures

2 Consideration
Great
plagues
remaine
for those
that do

sures up unto himself a farre more not fin-
 compleat vengeance for his dis- cerely
 steem and comtempt of the Gos- love
 pell. It were well, beloved, if when Christ.
 Christ Jesus comes unto a man, But do
 and that man receives him not, con-
 if he left him in no worse case temne
 then he found him, though that the Gos-
 were unconceivably miserable: pel.
 But it's never so. For if he enter-
 tains not Christ as a Saviour, he
 is sure to have him henceforth his
 accuser, and if he will not admit
 him *ad salutem*, he shall have him
 whether he will, or no, *ad Testi-*
monium. It's true which our Sa-
 viour told *Nicodemus* *Job. 3. 17.*
that God sent not his son into the
World to condemne the world, but
that the world through him might
be saved. Christ doth not knock
 at any mans heart with that in-
 tent that he may have the more
 advantage against him, if he let
 him

him not in, no he comes with purpose and desire to bring in salvation with him, but if he and his salvation be so little regarded that we entertain him onely with a few cold complements at door, as I may say, and so dismisse him. O then he goes away in a rage, complaines to his Father that for such ungratefull wretches he shed his dearest blood. And therefore though God sent his Son into the World to condemne it, yet it follows in the next verse, *he that believeth not is condemned already, because he believeth not in the name of the onely begotten Son of God. Condemned &c. he believeth not: Why?* the Law had sufficiently condemned him before. True, but now God offers him a pardon by his Son to exempt him from condemnation, which seeing he scornes, or cares not to accept,

God

God will now not only have the
other condemnation to continue
it's force against him, but will
load him with another more hea-
vy, which shall never be reversed
by any pardon. This is made more
plain by the verse following, *This
is the condemnation, that light is
come into the World, and men love
darknesse rather then light, that is ;*
For this is that great and finall
condemnation, which can never
be remitted, as that of the Law
may, that Christ is come into the
World, bringing redemption with
him, and men are so little sensible
of it, so dully affected with it,
that they care not for making any
use of him, but had rather con-
tinue Satans prisoner still, then
come forth into his marvellous
light. So that the neglect of Christ
Jesus and his Gospell, is that
which makes a man compleatly

The con-
tempt of
the Gos-
pel of
Christ
can ne-
ver be
remitted.

Ana-

Anathema Maranatha , because if we passe by him there remains henceforth no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearfull expectation of Judgment , Hebr. 10. 26. Mistake me not beloved , when I say there remains no more sacrifice for sin to those who have passed by Christ Jesus, I mean such as have passed him by for good and all , such as are not entirely incorporated into him before they are snatched out of this life. For indeed we have a redeemer so sensible of our infirmities , that when he comes wooing unto our souls, he will not be driven away at the first deniall. Alas ! if he should be so touchy, there would hardly ever any soul be espoused to him, seeing all of us naturally hang backe , finde excuses, and make many pauses , and demurres, before we give our consent. But our Saviour is so patient

25
towards our follies, that for all
his repulse he will vouchsafe to
come again and again, waite our
leasure, take all opportunity, solli-
cite the businesse by his holy Spi-
rit. But here is no ground for
presumption. For whosoever de-
nies him so often, or so peremp-
torily, that he is forced as if it
were to leave off his sute, during
the life of the party; or whoso-
ever dallies so long with him, that
he is called out of this life (as
who can promise himself an
hour) before the match be made
up: I say whosoever shall slight
his Saviour, or neglect him after
this manner, it had been a thou-
sand times better for him; that
Christ had never been borne into
the World, or at least that him-
self had been borne in such an
obscure corner of it, that he had
never heard of him. For his out-
ward

The wo-
full estate
of those
that de-
ny the
gracious
proffers
of Christ.
Jesus.

ward profession of, and with all the prerogative of it, with which he contented himself without any hearty love unto him, the fair offers of salvation which he had, and made nothing of, shall presse him more heavily at the day of Judgment, then all his sins against the law, though they were murders, when for these very reasons it shall be easier for Turkes, Americans, and Virginians then for him.

If you demand the reason of all this mischief, it is because the not laying to heart of what Christ hath done for us, and the not receiving him being offered us, with the thankfull affections of love and reverence, unmixt delight, and compleat content in him, is the highest dishonour, and basest indignity (except willfull Apostacy, or malicious blasphemy) which

The reason of all this mischief that falls upon the contempters of Christ is because the contempt of the Gospel can

can be offered by a sinfull man to the most blessed and glorius Trinity. Should I stand to recount and amplifie every circumstance of it, I think I should both weary and amaze you. Suffice it therefore only briefly to consider, how contempt offered to Christ and his Gospell reflects upon all the Persons of the blessed Trinity.

For the Father, whosoever sets light by his Son, doth most grossly undervalue both his wisdom and his goodnesse.

For his wisdom. The contriving of mans redemption by the death of his Son in the fullnesse of time is, so farre as is revealed to us, the master piece and chief plot (with reverence bet it spoken) which hath been from all eternity thought on by that infinite boundlesse wisdom of God blessed for ever; whereby he purposed

pell is a sinne against all the Persons in the Trinity.

I Against the wisdom of the Father.

God intended to get

Him
more
glory by
the re-
dempti-
on then
the crea-
tion of
mankind.

posed to get himself far more glory then he did by the creation of the World, when by a deliverance so superlatively admirable, he should both save mankind, and astonish it. This is that for which the Gospell is so often called the *wisdome of God unto salvation*. This is that mystery of Godlinesse which is great *ὁμολογούμεως*, by the confession of all without controversy, 1 Tim. 3. 16. This is that illustrious mystery of salvation, which the Prophets enquired after, and searched diligently with the Angels to look into, 1 Pet. 1. 10, 12. Lastly, this is that *πολυποίκιλος* *σοφία* that wisdom of God, which hath such curious variety in it, Ephes. 4. 10. Well then, to come to the point, when the time is come (as it is come to us, who live in this blessed noone-tide of the Gospell) that God reveals to
any

any man this astonishing mystery of his infinite wisdom, when he pleaseth to shew any man how admirably he hath contrived his salvation for him, by sending his own son to satisfy his justice, and therefore expects abundance of glory by it : if that man now a base varlet, created by God that he might applaud his lesser works of creation, shall behave himself so stupidly, that he, forsooth, can scarce have patience to take a full view of his Son, if he can espie no such Art in the contrivance as may ravish him, no such wonders as may withdraw his minde from those baubles, about which it was before busied, O beloved, this is an indignity to the glorious wisdom of God the Father, beyond all expression of mortall eloquence.

2. For his goodnesse and mercy.

2 Against
the
goodness
and mer-
cy of the
father.

cy. God the Father from ever-
lasting beholding mankind in the
ugly masse of corruption, through
their own wilfull rebellion, knew
he must be iust, and yet desired to
be mercifull. And when nothing
might make these two stand to-
gether, but satisfaction from one
as infinite as himself, *that he might
commend his love to us*, as the A-
postle speakes, *Rom. 3. 1.* he re-
solved not to spare *for Adams* the
Son of his Love, as he is called by
a significant Hebraisme, *Col. 1.*
v. 13. *But to send him in simili-*
tude of sinnefull flesh, to undergoe
that heavy businesse for us, pre-
suming as it is in the parable, that
howsoever his other messengers
had fared but ill in the world, yet
his Sonne the heire should be en-
tertained with reverence. O then
can we imagine with what hel-
lish contempt they even desye the
love

love of God towards them ; who
 look strangely upon his Son , who
 behave themselves towards him,
 as if his Father had sent him in a
 needles errand into the world , or
 as if there needed not to have
 been all this care taken for them.

2. In the next place , it would
 be an endlesse busines to rehearse
 the indignities which are offered
 to the second person in the Trini-
 ty, Christ himself , by such as call
 him Lord, Lord, but yet deal not
 honestly with him in their hearts.
Greater love them this bath no man,
then that he lay down his life for his
friend, saith our Saviour Job. 15. 13.
 true Lord , it's the greatest love
 that one friend can shew another,
 but yet thy love was greater unto
 us, in that thou layd'st down thy
 life for thy enemies , yea , in that
 thou vouchsafedst for our sakes to
 take such a life , which thou
 mightest

2 Against
 the Sone
 because
 his death
 and pas-
 sion is
 vilified
 and con-
 temned.

The bit-
ternesse
of Christs
Passion.

mightest lay down. Consider in brief I beseech you, how the Son of God out of meer obedience unto his Father, and compassion unto us rebellious wormes *extram* emptied himself of the lustre of his Deity, and in the forme of a servant humbled himself to the death, even the most painfull, and shamefull death of the Crosse, Phil. 2. 8. Peruse the History of his passion, yea of his whole life, which was little better then a passion: observe how throughly the sad predictions of a despised life & ignominious death Isa. 53. were fulfilled in him, how in every point he was made *isch enaccoboth, a man of sorrows*, draw into a Catalogue the rude discourtesies, churlish affronts, the revilings, buffetings, spittings, torments, agonies, and the contradictions of sinners all along (that is) of sinnefull caytifes, which he indured

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dured with patience. Lastly, remember that all this befell him onely because *the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all*, Isa. 53. 6. where the Hebrew phrase is elegantly significant, *hipbgiah*, *he hath made the iniquity of us all to meet on him*, as our translators have rightly expressed it in the margin. Remember still I say, that all this was but what we had deserved, and therefore we may well suppose him with pitifull moanes crying out unto us upon the crosse in the moning language of Jerusalem, Lam. 1. 12. *Is it nothing to all you that passe by! behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.* Now beloved, whosoever he be that hath read & heard all these things so punctually set down in the Gospell, that he hath had *his Saviour* even crucified before his eyes, whosoever is

con-

Christ is
more
tormen-
ted by
our in-
gratitude
then he
was by
his pas-
sion.

conceited and he believes this Hi-
story, and yet cannot bleed with
in, or weep without for his sins,
which were the cause of it, but
can be moved to more tender pas-
sions by a Tragicke fable, created
by the brain of a Poet, cannot
sympathise with his Saviour in
that passion which should have
been his, cannot by his serious
compunction share with him in
those agonies which should have
been all his own, cannot take these
mercies so deeply to heart, as with
the earnest pangs of yerning affe-
ctions to desire to be crucified with
Christ, as *S. Paul* speaks of him-
self *Gal. 2. 20.* And to live the rest
of his life in the flesh by the faith of
the Son of God, who loved him, and
gave himself for him, questionlesse
that man offers his Saviour the
most cutting injury, and does him
the most villanous spight that it's

possible for a mortall wretch to offer unto the Lord of Glory. That mans ingratitude is more painfull unto Christ Jesus then all the thornes were in his head, and wounds him more deeply then the nayles did his hands and feet, and therefore we cannot imagine a lighter curse then *Anathema Maranatha* to be due unto him. For by his sottish neglect of that death of which his sins as well as any mans else were a cause, he becomes guilty of the murder of the Son of God, yea one of those *οὐκ ἔχοντες ἑαυτοὺς ἰσχυροὺς ὡς ἡμεῖς*; by *ἑαυτοὺς*, I understand *τὸ κατ' ἑαυτοὺς*, and English it, who crucifie as much as in them lies the Son of God *παράδειγμα ᾧ ὄντας* and expose him like a malefactor to publicke shame, Heb. 6. 6.

3. Lastly, whosoever instructed in the Gospell doth not in earnest love

3 Against the holy Ghost,

because
his la-
bour for
love to
Christ is
in vaine.

love Christ Jesus he vexes and grieves the third person in the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, whose chief businesse here below is to worke our hearts unto the love of Christ, and as I said before, to sollicite the match between him and our souls. And this is one reason why our saviour being to leave this World, speakes so much in Saint John of what the comforter should do for him after his departure. *He shall testifie of me, John 13. He shall glorifie me, 16, 14.* Whosoever therefore makes the Holy Spirit to labour in vain, not suffering his perswasions to make any impressions upon his heart, or to get thence any glory for him, whose agent he is, but thinks he does Christ Jesus kinnesse enough in that he suffers himself to be called a Christian, rather then a Jew or Mahumetan,
or

or Protestant rather than a Papist. In what a fit of discontent, in what a chafe (may we think) doth that man send, or rather drive away the Spirit of Grace. All that I have said in this second consideration is comprised in that terrifying place *Heb. 10. 28, 29.* which I know is there applyed unto Apostates ; but we must note, that all hypocrites are Apostates in Gods sight, & therefore what we may apply unto an Apostate in particular, because he discovers the rottenness of his heart in the sight of men, we may apply unto hypocrites in generall, because there is in them the same evill heart of unbelief, though we cannot so particularly smel them out : the words are, *He that despised Moses Law died without mercy, under two or three witnessses, of how much sorer punishment suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy,*

38 The triall of a Christians

thy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified Κοινόν (as the blood of a common man, or malefactor, not as the blood of a sacrifice) and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace.

Applic. You see the fearfully accursed estate of those professors of Christianity, who deal falsely with their Saviour, and love him not at the heart, you see upon what slippery tearmes we stand between the greatest curses, and the greatest blessings. If we have indeed made Christ Jesus our portion, if we have been so feelingly affected with his favours towards us, that now with the Spouse in the Canticles we are even sicke with love of him. If as the Apostle prays for the Ephesians, we are so rooted and grounded in love, that we can
bring

1. The
benefit
of embracing
Christ
and his
Gospell.

bring good proofs, that with a constant resolution, we preferre the intellectuall pleasures which issue from his reconciled countenance, before whatsoever else is most pretious and dear unto us, O then we may hagg our selves as men over-joyed, for as sure as God is God, all his rich promises in Christ Jesus shall be yea and Amen unto us. But on the contrary, if those heavenly raptures and glorious trances of sweetest intercourse between Christ and our souls sound as Phantastick dreams and harsh Paradoxes unto us, if we stupidly content our selves with an empty profession of his name, and heartlesse conformity unto the outward garb of the Gospell, never striving either to expresse or to feel the inward power of it; if we go on in a heavy, sluggish, dull, manner, never re-

The danger of a meer outward profession of Christs Gospell.

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1. The
benefit
of embracing
Christ
and his
Gospel.

bring good proofs, that with a constant resolution, we preferre the intellectuall pleasures which issue from his reconciled countenance, before whatsoever else is most pretious and dear unto us, O then we may hugg our selves as men over-joyed, for as sure as God is God, all his rich promises in Christ Jesus shall be yea and Amen unto us. But on the contrary, if those heavenly raptures and glorious trances of sweetest intercourse between Christ and our souls sound as Phantastick dreams and harsh Paradoxes unto us, if we stupidly content our selves with an empty profession of his name, and heartlesse conformity unto the outward garb of the Gospell, never striving either to expresse or to feel the inward power of it; if we go on in a heavy, sluggish, dull, manner, never re-

The danger of a meer outward profession of Christs Gospell.

tiring unto our Saviour but in some melancholy moodes, which we are quickly weary of, blindly presuming of much from him, and caring not how little he hath from us: O then we most grossly delude our selves: for the curse of curses *Anathema Maranatha* doth most certainly belong unto us. I presume almost there is not any man in this assembly but would think himself much wronged, if one should seriously tell him he did not love Christ Jesus: Not love Christ? Why, we imagine we all do it naturally, we take it as the custome of the countrey to say so. It is not my purpose to dishearten any man, would to God that the laest sparke of love unto Christ in any mans heart here were a glorious flame. But yet I would have no man to deceive himself in this point, then which
nothing

nothing more easy, nothing more dangerous. God is not mocked, he requireth truth in the inward parts, and the exactest kind of love that can be imagined. Do you think beloved, but that the Jews in our Saviours time were confidently perswaded that they loved God : they persecuted our Saviour indeed because they could not apprehend him to be the Son of God . but for God himself they made full account that they , and none but they loved him aright. Here was , I dare say , as strong a perswasion of love to God, if confidence would bear out the matter , as in the greater part of Christians of their love unto Christ. But behold how miserably they were deceived *Joh. 5. 42.* our Saviour expressely tells them, *But I know you that ye have not the love of God in you.* The like grosse

It is dangerous to be confident in a customary love to God.

deceit of the Jewes may be observed in the same chapter about their love unto *Moses*, why they were tooth and naile for *Moses*. The Law and name of *Moses* was the glory of their nation, for which no doubt but many if they had been put to it, would resolutely have lost their lives in our Saviours time, as their ancestors had done before, or their posterity since, so that one would have thought he might have sworn they loved *Moses*, but yet when the matter comes to scanning you shall find there was no such matter, for indeed they were so false hearted to *Moses*, that at the last day he shall be their chief accuser, witnesse our Saviour verse 45. *There is one that accuseth you in whom ye trust, that is, on whom ye presume, for had you believed Moses &c. Lastly, to rouse us out*
of

of the slumber of our presumption, let us take notice of one example more, taken out of Mat. 7. 22. Luk. 13. 26. where we read, that many shall come at the last day unto Christ, presuming upon their familiarity with him, some telling him they had eaten and drank in his presence, some expostulating with him. *Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, cast out Divells, and done many wonderfull works.* Would you imagine all this could be without great love unto Christ? O how confident should we be if we had such evidence of our union with him! How safe should we think our selves, could we challenge acquaintance with him upon the same termes, when he shall come in his glory to judgement. But yet you see all this might do us no good, seeing our Saviour will send many such packing with

an angry protestation that he knows them not, and if he will not know them, you may be sure they were such as had not for all these flourishes dealt kindly and lovingly with him. Wherefore beloved, you see how much it concernes us to pause a while on this matter: We all think we love Christ Jesus; it were well if thinking would serve the turne: but we see that many, who thought as confidently as we, and perhaps upon better grounds, shall then perceive themselves mistaken, when it shall be too late to remedy it. O then let us not venture our selves upon such groundlesse surmises, but while we have time to make all sure, let us make it our businesse to settle the estate of our souls, which hang upon such nice points, let not our shallow presumptuous conceits of our love

to

to Christ, let not the lazinesse and untowardnesse of our flesh hinder us from a speedy, impartial, industrious examination of our hearts, whether they have indeed the love of Christ in them or no.

If upon due enquiry wee finde in our selves the true ground of love unto our Saviour, to wit, a tender affectionate apprehension of our infinite deserved miseries, and his infinite undeserved mercies, if we feel the fruites of it, a constant, even, universall resolution to please him in all things, at all times, in all companies, a disesteem of whatsoever is honourable or pleasant in the World, in comparison of his favour, a continuall hunger and thirst after neerer and more sensible communion with him, I say if upon exact triall thou find in they self these infallible notes of real love

The infallible notes of real love unto Christ.

C 5 unto

46 *The triall of a Christians*

unto thy Saviour, then I hope it will not repent thee of thy labour. For now thou knowest upon what ground thou standest, now thy joy may be full, assuring thy self that thou shalt have a confidence, which shall not deceive thee before thy Saviour at his appearing. Contrariwise, if when thou entrest into thy heart, thou findest no sacred fire upon the hearth, but all cold and uncomfortable, if thou hast not yet been acquainted with those prickings of heart, and affrightments of conscience for thy finnes, which usually put poor humbled souls into those vehement fits of love unto our Saviour, if thou canst give no reason of thy supposed love unto Christ from any thing that thou hast felt in thy self, but onely from what other men say from the Lawes and customes of the place, where

where thou art a subject, then thou findest thy self but in a unhappy case; yet thou art happy in this, that thou knowest the worst of thy self, and maist seek out betimes for an effectuall remedy. If this be thy case consider seriously, that thou art yet under the heavy curse in my text, and therefore impatient of this accursed estate, recollect thy self, and call a speedy assembly of thy best wits, and then be think thy self, that Christianity is no ludicrous, or jesting matter, that the profession of Christ is the most serious businesse in the World, that therefore questionlesse there is a great deal more in it, then the formalities of comming to Church, carrying a Bible, hearing a sermon, that without doubt Christ requires a reall inward disposition of the soul, which should season all

all these complements , and make them acceptable.

The
summe
& scope
of Chri-
stianity.

3. Consider in the next place the summe and scope of Christianity, which is onely to shew how miserable thou art by sin, and how happy thou mayst be in Christ. When thou art come thus farre, set the looking glass: of the Law before thee , and terrifie thy self with the ugly deformities and loathsome staines of thy soule through the guilt of sinne , then turne unto the Gospell , and consider how Christ Jesus out of the abundance of his love , with which he loved thee being his enemy, shed his dearest blood to wash away these staines from thy soul, as very a wretch as thou art, as well as any mans else.

Prayer
the best
armour
of a
Christi-
an.

4. Lastly, having thy soul attentively fixed upon this, betake thy self to earnest prayer , and with
strong

strong cries and groanes importune the spirit of grace to enlighten the eyes of thy understanding, that thou mayest be able to comprehend with all Saints what is the breadth, length, and height, and depth, & to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, Eph. 3. 19. Do this from thy heart, and continue in it a while with an eager patience, and then I dare be bold to say that thou shalt feel a strange alteration in thy self, then shalt thou feel *ἡ ἀλλὰ παῖς* *αἰνέσει* not one simple commotion in thy soule, but an assembly and throng of passions, then shalt thou be acquainted with those scalding affections to Christ Jesus, which holy men have felt in all ages, and strived to expresse in their soliloquies but could not, yea the greater sinner thou hast been the more wilt thou with Ma-
ry

ry *Luc. 7.* lay about thee with tears of sorrow, and tears of joy, and in a holy kinde of distraction strive to love much, because much is forgiven thee. Lastly, thou wilt plainly see how villanously hitherto thou hast dissembled with thy Saviour, and what a deal of Angelicall comfort thou hast lost by being a stranger unto him, and having once after some cloudy scuds of penitent sadness recovered the light, thou wilt rejoyce as the wise men, when they recovered the light of the starre, with exceeding great joy, and follow it through thicke & thinne, through all difficulties & oppositions whatsoever, till thou shalt come to see him as he is in incomprehensible splendor amongst infinite millions of glorified Saints and Angels; To whom with the Father and blessed Spirit, the three glorious persons

sons and one most infinite Deity,
be ascribed all honour, power,
might, majestic, and dominion
now and for ever, *Amen.*

EPHES.

EPHES. 6. V. 24.

*Grace be with all them that love our
Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.*

NOt to mispend any good
time in a needlesse pre-
face, my text is part of
the farewell close of an
heavenly Epistle, wherein the com-
poser of it in the solemne forme
of a benediction wisheth Grace
(that is) all those precious mer-
cies and glorious benefits which
flow from the grace and favour of
God unto all such as love Christ
Jesus in sincerity. The originall
hath *ὁ ἀφραγή* in incorruption;
as our tranſlatours have expres-
sed it in the margent, the sense is
all one; for to love Christ in since-
rity, is to embrace him intirely
without any rottenesse of heart,
without any unsoundnesse of af-
fections;

fections, without any mixture of hypocrisie. The Greek Scholiast conceived the Apostle by the word *ἀθάνατος* to have required not so much to sincerity, as perpetuity of love unto Christ, in those whom he blesses, and therefore he expoundeth it by the adverb *ἀθάνατος* understanding it not so much of a pure uncorrupt, as of a constant incorruptible love, which yet alwayes presupposeth the other. I confesse the word may very well fit under this interpretation, but yet I preferre the former before it, & both a great deal before Beza's (with due reverence unto so incomparable a man) who hath turned all quite another way, referring *ἐν ἀθάνατος* not to love but to grace, and taking it for *ἐν ἀθάνατος ad immortalitatem*, as if the sense were to be, Grace by with all them which love

love Christ Jesus, unill they come, or to bring them unto immortality. The construction of the word, which our translatours have made choyce of, he rejects, because he could not remember, that ~~apostle~~ had any where that signification; I confesse it's a very rare one, and for that reason I have insisted upon it, being perhaps only to be found in the New Testament; but if any man please to look in the 2 *Tit. v. 7.* he shall there find the word, and hardly capable of any other construction. *Beza* indeed suspecting that it crept out of the margent into the text, hath there left it quite out, which I wonder at, seeing himself confesses that he found it in the ancient Greek Copies, wherefore I suppose without any prejudice to the discourse which I shall build upon this scripture I may

pro-

proceed confidently according to our own translation, especially seeing I know some six more of good note, which all read either *in*, or *with* sincerity: In brief then, the meaning of my text is this, Let the favour of God and all those blessings which issue from it, rest upon those who do not by groundlesse presumptions flatter themselves, or by counterfeite appearance perswade others that they love Christ Jesus, but do in very deed and good earnest love him with al their hearts, and with all their souls. Or thus, Let the gracious promises of God in Christ be fulfilled upon them, and them onely, who embrace and obey his Gospell with sound and honest hearts, who are true Christians in whom is no guile. For we must note, that as the whole Law of God *ἀνακεφαλαιῶται*, as the Apostle speaks, is sum-

summarily comprised in the word Love, Love to our neighbour including all the duties of the second table, and Love to God the duties of both, though more immediately those of the first; even so our love unto Christ compriseth all the duties, all the respect and homage, which we owe unto him and his Gospell.

It is not my purpose to dismember my text by the untoward curiosity of a division: I have not as yet learned that piece of method. The reasons inducing me to the choyce of this Scripture arose from a serious consideration of the spirituall estate of these times.

In this We live in an age of most pe-
 age every remptory presumption, and we
 one pre- may observe, that our presumpti-
 sumes he on of the end is upheld by our
 shall he presumption of the means. No
 saved on- man but thinks he shall be saved,
 ly be- and

& why? because every man thinks himself to be a Christian, to be one that loves Christ, which to speak more rationally is but our presumption; for it is no presumption for a man to believe that he shall be saved, unlesse he be unassured of this supposition, that he is a Christian. In a word, whereas there is a twofold grace of God, his promising and rewarding grace, and then his qualifying or sanctifying grace, we presume upon that because we presume upon this, we make full account of his mercies and promises, because we make no question of those holy qualifications in our selves, which dispose us to believe in him and to love him. Now then seeing we all suppose that the everlasting favours of God do most unfallibly appertain unto all, and none but such, as love Christ Jesus.

cause he thinks himself to be a Christian, and one that loves Christ.

Jesus.

Ius. 2. that our selves are all such; the first supposall being cleer out of my text, all our care must be for the second, to see that we are not mistaken in our account of our selves. The triall of all lies in this sincerity, whether we are indeed those men in respect of Christ, which we verily think our selves be. That therefore I may acquaint you both with the necessity and methode of this triall, that I might shew you both what need we have to examine the sincerity of our love unto Christ & Christianity, and after what manner we ought to go about it, that if it may please the opener and turner of hearts to effect any thing by so contemptible an instrument, I may awake some one out of that pleasant, but deadly slumber, which possesseth thousands in this land, and cause him to look better to
his

standing. I have resolved by the assistance of the spirit at several opportunities to discourse unto you of three generall heads, or most considerable points in our love unto Christ; 1. the ground or foundation of our love unto Christ; the reasons wherefore we are Christians. 2. the degree or intention of our love unto Christ; how much we ought to love him, or in what pitch of resolution to resign our selves unto him. 3. the effects and operations of our love unto him, or the speciall fruites of our sincerity. In my discourse of the ground of our love unto Christ, I have proposed unto myself this method. 1. I will discover two deceivable insufficient grounds which at this day betray thousands unto perdition, causing them to fall short of those glorious hopes which were built up-
on

The division is into three most considerable points of our love unto Christ.

on them. 2. I will lay open the true ground and proper originall from whence all sincere affection unto Christ ariseth. The first of those deceivable grounds, is *custome*, the discovering of which will take up as much time as your patience will be willing to allow me at once.

The fall of man hath not so far worne out of his heart the impressions of a Deity, and the engrafted notions of religion, but that we all bring into the world with us those restlesse instincts, and importunate impulsions, which will not suffer us to be at quiet untill we are initiated into some Religion or other. The Antient Epicures, though it were the scope of their damned profession, to be altogether irreligious, & the most contenting perfection they could project unto themselves, yet as

wee may perceive by such writings as they have left us, they could never fully attaine unto it, but it spight of their affected Atheisme they were forced to betray many shrewd grudgings and terrible gripes of naturall conscience. And though in the deniall of divine providence, upon the supposall of which depends all religion, they put a good face upon it, and seem to laugh at the matter, yet we may perceive they were still gawled with that *firmitudo oppositi*, and by those engraved principles were ever and anon stung to reall fear of that truth, which they would faine have mocked out of the world either as an ancient invention of policy to keep men in awe, or as an inveterate slavery of vulgar ignorance. The same inbred seeds of religion by which it pleaseth God

The very Epicures felt often the gripes of conscience.

to force a manifestation of himself upon those, who would fall have no notice of him, and in the most reprobate mindes to make Atheisme rather a wish then an opinion, after so many successions of ages are no whit decayed, but continue still as stirring and active in the hearts of men, as ever they were since they received that unhappy crush by the first transgression. For the Creator of all things, as the Psalmist tells us, *Psalm* 33. 15. fashioneth the hearts of all men alike; the word is *וְיָ* which signifies together at once, intimating that the hearts of all men though separated from one another by never so vast a gulf of time or place, are as exactly alike in respect of their original inclinations, as if they had been all moulded at the same time. The worship of a God then, some kind of

The necessity of a Religion.

of religion is necessary unto us, According to we cannot shift it off: but now the propensions of nature being blind and confused, and there being a various multiplicity of religions in the worl'd, here ordinarily step in the lawes and customes of the countrey so is our worship. into which the wombe of nature first empties us, which shape our generall inclinations either to worship the true God, or this or that Idoll, and the true God after this or that manner. Look abroad into the World and observe the swarmes of divers and contrary religions, which either fill places apart by themselves, or are promiscuously exercised amongst one another, and you shall perceive them to be nothing but the naturall instincts of religion in generall, speciflicated into diverse formes and fashions by birth and education. For albeit there may

be many occasions of, and difficulties in the first bringing in of a religion into a countrey, yet after it hath once by countenance from supream authority & other plau-
 sibilites insinuated it self into the acceptance and approbation of the multitude, it thenceforth becomes *καὶ ποταμὸς ὁ τοῦ*, to use Saint Peters word, and with an easie descent runnes down the stream of succession, being delivered from Father to Son as naturally, as the proper language, manner of diet, fashion of apparell, or any other customes of the countrey.

There is but one true religion, by the which true happiness is attained.

What true Religion is.

Now amongst so many religions, as in severall parts of the World are by custome conveyed and passed from one to another, we suppose there is but one, which we may dare to trust for our happiness, but one that can certainly do our souls that good which most

most of them would seem to promise. Neither will we seem to doubt but that this one saving religion is that, which consists in the knowledge of the only true God, and whom he hath sent Jesus Christ, and therefore we will all seem to be much in love with this heavenly profession, before any other whatsoever. If then we will be sure not to cosen our selves in these perswasions, not to overreckon our selves in our love unto Christ and his Gospell, here is a maine businesse for us, punctually to enquire how we came by this love and liking unto Christ, upon what motive we have preferred the profession of Christ before such a multitude of Religions in the World. You know that no art or invention can force waters to mount above their spring head: in like manner, it's impossible that

The
motives
or rea-
sons of
our em-
bracing
of Chri-
tianity
before all
other re-
ligion.

our affections unto Christ should be more elevated, more heavenly and spirituall, then the originall from whence they stream. If then being put to it by our selves or others, we can think of no better reasons for our choice of Christianity then such as these, because we had the fortune to be borne in a place where Christ onely was talked of, because we have heard *Turkes, Jewes, and Papists* much spoken against, and were ever told that this is the best religion, because the King and Lawes, have banished all other Sects, and have established this profession of Christ which we have alwayes been brought up in, and could never see any harme in it, if such sottish, senselesse stuffe be the best defence we can make for our selves, it appears too plainly that our religion is nothing but those common reli-

li-

liquies of naturall instincts, which
I spoke before, christned, as it
were, by humane Lawes and cu-
stomes; and that we are Chri-
stians upon no weightier induce-
ments then we might have been
Pagans or *Idolaters*. I tremble to
speak it, if an *Indian* should be
demanded why he worshipped the
Divell, charging only the circum-
stances, he might give as sufficient
reasons as these for his most fear-
full and horrible Idolatry. But
this example, though it might
square but to well to my purpose,
is too odious to be insisted upon.
Aske a common *Jew* why he blas-
phemes our blessed Saviour, why
he expects another *Messias*, a *Turke*
why he is circumcised, why he is
so devoted to *Mahomet*, they will
both in effect give the very same
reasons of their blasphemies and
superstitions, which a common

ignorant Christian will give why he is rather a Christian then a *Jew* or a *Turke*, justifie their damned hatred and detestation of Christ, by the same arguments, which cause him to professe speciall love and service unto him. Nay you will say, there is no Christian so barbarously ignorant, but he may say more for himself then any of those unbelieving miscreants can, he hath heard the holy Scripture read, been made partakers of the blessed Sacraments, he hopes to have his finnes forgiven him by Christ, and though he be not able to prove it by formall argumentation, he knowes well enough that *Turkes* & all such as speak against Christ are accused infidels. I think indeed there are not many Christians but may say so much, and perhaps more, by rote, and taking it up upon

upon trust, but this is quite besides the purpose. For I do not now question the Christian in the duties or opinions of his Religion, but I call upon him for his speciall reasons which cause him to performe those duties, or embrace those opinions. He hath been partaker of the blessed Sacraments, but what better reason can he give why these Sacraments can do his soul good, then a *Turke* may why his circumcision should be beneficiall unto him & hee hath heard the Scriptures read and expounded, but what better reason can he give, why he supposeth the Scriptures to be the word of God, then the *Turke* will, why he is so confident that the *Alcoran* came downe immediately from heaven, in that *laylatto-Hankili*, לילת הנקיל as they call it, the night of demission; Lastly, he sily conceits

D 5 him.

70 *The triall of a Christians*
himself to be one of the only true
faith, and all *Turkes* to be abhor-
red infidels, but what peculiar evi-
dences hath he that the *Turkes* are
mistaken and not himself, seeing
they are as confident on the
other side, that Christians are
כַּפִּירוּנָא *Casirouna*, Infidels, as
they tearm us, and that them-
selves are the onely מוֹסְלִימִינָא
Moslimina or *Musulmans* (that is)
right believers? If then the Chri-
stians being pressed with these de-
mands can produce nothing from
any supernaturall alteration, which
he hath felt wrought in himself, if
he be not able from spirituall self
experience of that cutting convin-
cing power of the Scriptures, and
of those admirable vertues and
comfortable influences of the Sa-
craments, if he be yet altogether
unacquainted with those coele-
stiall flashes, irradiations, and in-
ward testimonies of the spirit,
which

which use to put all these things
out of question in soules truly
Christianiz'd ; Lastly, if for want
of better Apologie he be forced to
retire to those poor, dishonoura-
ble, impertient, rather excuses
then reasons of his religion, taken
from the lawes and customes of
his countrey, it is too too manifest
that he adheres unto Christ upon
no better motive then others blas-
pheme and persecute him, and even
spit at the mention of his name.

To plead
custome
and law
of the
countrey
is rather
an ex-
cuse then
a reason
of ones
Religion.

But here some may put in; how-
soever such a Christian may be
out-braved, yet that which he
sayes and thinks is true; he is in
the right though he cannot de-
monstrate like a Schollar how he
came to it, and therefore hee is
sure howsoever men may prate, to
speed well enough.

No such matter, it is a very dis-
putable case, whether such an one

as

Little
diffe-
rence be-
twixt a
Christian
and a
Turke, if
the for-
mer be so
only up-
on cu-
stome.

as lives and dyes a Christian upon
custome, or a *Turke* be in the grof-
fer error. This may seeme very
harsh, but you may easily espie
the truth of it, if you please to
remember, that both the assent
of our understandings and choice
of our wills may be misguided in-
to errour two wayes: either by
assenting unto, and approving that
as true and good, which in it self
is false and evill, or by assenting
unto, or approving that, which
is both true and good in it self,
upon weak, incoherent, insufficient
inducements; I cannot stand to
comment upon this distinction,
and it is so triviall, that I conceive
it need not much to be exempli-
fied. Applied unto my purpose it
cleerly shewes the ignorant Chri-
stian not to be a whit more in the
right then the *Turke*. The object
of his assent and love is most right
ab-

absolutely in it self, because it is not an object unto him for that truth and goodnesse, by which it's distinguished from all other objects, but for those common corrupt grounds, which abstractly considered, equally incline the soul to any object, as well to the grossest errors, as the purest truth to the extreamest evill, as to the chiefest good. So that this comparison is like to light most heavily upon the Christian, seeing the goodnesse of the object will not excuse or justifie, but rather shame and condemne him, who professing much love unto it, passeth by that which alone was lovely in it. For the present indeed the Christians case is infinitely the better, because he may with more ease correct his error, and hath all requisite opportunities to that purpose, but if he neglect to do it,

The Christians case is the better only by reason of the opportunities of correcting his error.

it, hereafter the *Turke* will get the better of him, when at the day of judgment, he that hath dyed such a Christian, will be glad to change places with him. In the mean time, there is not any difference in their errours discernable to reason; for this is certain, that diversity of objects cannot put any difference in the assents, where the grounds are exactly the same: yea if some of the acutest moderne disputers have rightly determined, that the assent unto the premises and the conclusion is but one & the same assent, being originally to *these* and terminatively to *this*, I can scarce allow the difference to be so great. For then it skills not how false or true the conclusion be absolutely in it self, but how strongly or weakly it's inferred out of it's premises; and therefore though one conclude an infallible truth, and

and another a monstrous falshood out of the same faulty premises, the error of both is the same, if they assent unto their conclusions upon no other *medium* then this insufficient one, upon which they both agree. For example, the principle upon which the ignorant Christians assent unto the Gospell stands, is this : That Religion, which my Parents have taught mee, my Sovereign commanded me, and the common cry of my countrey approved, is surely the best. The *Turke* changing only the appropriating circumstances, supposeth likewise that Religion, which his *Sultan*, Parents, and countrey men have commended unto him, to be questionlesse the best. Both then proceed upon the same *medium*, and therefore though by the intervention of other casualties the *Turke* be cast upon

The ignorant Christians assent unto the Gospell, and the Turkes to the Alcoran, proceed both upon the same grounds.

upon execrable blasphemies and impieties, and the Christian upon heavenly and holy truths, their error is directly the same, though more fortunate in one then in the other. And howsoever such a Christian hath his assent and imaginary love by lot of his birth and education, actually fixed upō saving truths, yet untill he bethink himself of more proper and solid reasons for his choice, he retains still in his breast habitually & implicitly the seeds of all those hellish impostures, which by other men, in other places, have been entertained and swallowed upon the same occasions. Suppose a Christian, who can make no better defence for his profession then such a one as I have laboured to make him ashamed of, Immediately after his birth in England had been conveyed into Turkey, and there instead

stead of Baptisme circumcised after the Turkish manner, and there cunningly trained up in the Turkish superstition, that he had no occasion given him to suspect himself not to have been born a Turk: no question but he would have been as zealous there for the rascall Mahomet, as now being bred in England, he is for the blessed Lord of the World. And no marvell, for the very same occurrences which have made him a Christian here, must needs have made him a Mahometan at Constantinople, seeing that whatsoever arguments drawn from lawes, customs, birth, education, plead here for Christ, would there perswade as effectually for Mahomet. Neither speak I this as if this would argue any notorious imperfection in the man: for doubtles this would be any mans case: Suppose
any

any of those renowned Champions of Christ, whom Queen Mary sent to Heaven in fiery Chariots, had been nursed and brought up amongst the Saracens, unlesse God had vouchsafed them a miracle for their conversion, we cannot imagine but they would have been Saracens. Suppose the devoutest Saint of God at this day breathing had been trained up at the feet of some Jewish Rabbin, if we look no higher then ordinary means, we must needs conceive that with the hellish malice of a Jew he would have defied that blessed Saviour of his, whom now he worships day and night. I mentioned not that therefore to shew the wakenesse of the person, but of such reasons of his Christianity, as changing only the scene of his nativity and education, might have made him hotter against it then

then now he is for it. So that the onely fundamentall reason why such a Christian is rather a Christian then a Jew, Turke, or Idolater, is because Christianity bespoke him as soon as hee came into the world, and permitted not those mad superstitions either to speak with him at all, or not till it self had prevented them and gotten possession. For we may observe, that albeit generally in the world error keepes truth out of the souls of men by anticipation, damming up all the passages by which shee should enter with base preconceit and odious prejudices, yet in some corners where divine providence hath been pleased to allow truth an authorised, settled residency, it gets the start of error, and prevails as much by prepossession here, as error doth in other places, beating that away with,

A formal Christian by education only and the custom of his country.

with the same clamours and outcries by which it self is elsewhere baffled. But this to speak more punctually is not a fight between truth and error, though by the undiscerning vulgar it be mistaken for it, but a kinde of blindfold combat between prejudice and prejudice, or of custome against custome. For in these cases though truth block up errors way, and so keep that from stealing into the soul, yet doth not shee presently enter in her self, but stands, as it were, before the door displaying her resplendent rarities and admirable perfections; if for their sakes alone shee be not earnestly invited to come in, and importunn'd to take up her lodging there, shee vouchsafeth not to enter, but at last flings away in disdain. Men may imagine shee is gone in because they cannot hear or see here.

heresie or superstition stirring within, but for certain saving truth never presseth into any soul upon the bare advantage of being the first commer, but for her own singular worth shee lookes to be wooed, importuned, & with some violence haled in, as the blessedst guest that could possibly have come first or last.

But here may some demand, if the sum of all this that hath been spoken be true, to wit. That our love unto Christ and his Gospell be not gotten by our birth and education amongst Christians, what benefit is it to be borne within the visible Church? What prerogative to be bred in the light of the Gospeell? I answered, that it's an advantage of inestimable value, for which we all owe more thanks and prayses unto the Lord then our shallow brains and narrow

The benefit of our birth and education amongst Christians.

row hearts can possibly conceive. But we must wisely consider the proper end and use for which it hath pleased the Father of light to afford us this blessed priviledge, which is not that it should be a cause but a means, not a ground but an occasion of our love unto his beloved Son. In our common friendship we can easily distinguish between the contingent occasions of our acquaintance with a man, and the immediate reasons of our affectionate love unto him: those are accidentally offered from without, these are some special excellencies apprehended by us to be inherent in the person we affect, those are but means to bring us to the knowledge of these. Even so in our spirituall love unto Christ Jesus blessed for ever, the Lord hath graciously planted us within the sound of the Gospell,
given

given us education in Christian rites and fashions, and provided us the testimony of the Church to tell us that there is such a Saviour come into the world, and to bring us joyfull newes what unvaluable treasures of mercy and glory he hath brought with him to enrich all such as shall come unto him, pinched with the sence of their spirituall poverty; Those are the means appointed to give us notice of *these*, but *these* only must be the grounds of our affection unto him.

To conclude this discourse, albeit our love unto Christ, begotten by our naturall birth and education, be nothing worth in it self, yet is it the ordinary rode which leades us to the sight and sence of those transcendent perfections in him which will ravish us with a more transcendent love of him:

him: Happy are we if that base vulgar love be in time swallowed up in a love more celestiall and divine, if that which can do our souls no good while we rest upon it becomes a manuduction unto that which will certainly make us blessed. Had not the *Samaritans* believed at first upon an insufficient ground, the alarum of the woman, they had not come to believe upon the true, their own knowledge and experience. Had not the faithfull soul, which is now most sicke of a spirituall love unto her Saviour, first loved him upon hear-say and custome, shee had never felt, in all probability, those heavenly trances, and unutterable ravishments, with which now shee is transported. All that love which wee professe unto Christ between our first birth, and the first pangs of the second, is a
love

love arising only from nature and
 custom, and is tolerable in us
 while we are children being not
 so properly an error as an in-
 troduction unto truth: I say it is
 a hopefull preparation in chil-
 dren, which are not come to that
 ripenesse of their naturall facul-
 ties, that the ordinary means of
 grace the preaching of the Gospell
 may worke upon them. But after
 they have attained to maturity of
 reason, and should begin to have
 αἰσθητικὰ γυμνασμεῖα as the A-
 postle speaks, their senses exercised
 to discern between good and
 vill, if they proceed still in such
 childish conceits of Christ Jesus,
 and drowisie affections unto him,
 as they sucked from their nurses
 breasts, their love begins now to
 be grossely sinfull, and whensoever
 it shall please the Lord to thunder
 them out of that sleep of death,
 E where-

wherein now they enjoy some contenting dreams they must penitently bewail it amongst the other sins of their unregeneracy.

I have done with my discovery of the false ground of love unto Christ, by naturall instincts of religion, restrained to Christianity by birth and education. Before I proceed to an application of this discourse, I will insist upon some opposite places of holy Scripture, which will adde both light and strength unto the precedent discourse, and I hope prepare your hearts to the ensuing application. And first we have an excellent place, *Cant. 5. v. 9.* where the spouse, that is, the faithfull soule hath this interrogatory doubled unto her, *what is thy beloved more then a beloved* מִדּוּדִּים מִדּוּדִּים *mab-dodek middod*, *what is thy beloved more then a beloved?* that is, what
tran-

transcendencies, what singularities of alluring perfections, are so peculiarly remarkable in that Saviour of thine, on whom thou art so strangely enamored, as if there were nothing lovely besides him? But what hath the soul nothing now to commend in her Saviour, but what might be paralleled in some other? Yea from that verse to the end of the Chapter, shee runs on in a description of his rarities; a description so stuffed with the choicest delicacies of expression, that I am perswaded it cannot be matched out of any of those poets, which have flowne highest in amorous inventious; I cannot stand to unfold them unto you: that which makes most to my purpose in it, is the superlative preeminence which shee gives him. v. 10. *Hee is the chiefest*, or as it is more elegantly in the ori-

ginall, He is an ensigne bearer amongst ten thousand, for so the word דַּגָּל דַּגָּל Daggull, properly signifies, v. 16. He is altogether lovely; עֲלֻלָּהּ עֲלֻלָּהּ *cullo machamadim*, he is all entire, he is all composed of loves; whereupon she concludes with a triumphant Epiphonema, *This is my beloved, and this is my friend, o yee daughters of Ferusalem,* A second memorable place is Phil. 1. v. 9, 10. S. Paul speaks thus, *And this I pray, that your love (to wit, to Christ and his Gospell) may abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment, that you may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence, till the day of Christ.* The Apostle praying for the confirmation of their love unto the Gospell, and as an especiall meanes of that hee prayes, they may abound in all judge-

Judgement, by which they may be able upon good grounds to approve the real excellencies of truth, before the plausibilities of error, that so they may be sincere in their love unto it, to which purpose also he prays for the Ephesians, that they may be rooted and grounded in love, Ephes. 3. 17. A third considerable place is, 1 Cor. 12. 3. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed, and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost: that is, no man can with the fiduciall assent of his heart, acknowledge Christ to be the only Lord, which he is to worship by the same impulsions, by which another curses & blasphemes him but by such peculiar motives as are suggested and revealed unto him by the holy Ghost.

There is no man in this assembly but would think it very strange, if one should tel him seriously he could not say, no not so much as think, that Jesus is the Lord. But if he think and say him to be *Anathema*, his saying will do him no good though he make it his only worke to reveal it as long as he lives. The last place shall be that eminent one in *S. Peter* 1. 3. 15. *But sanctify the Lord in your hearts, and be ready alwayes to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you,* What rason; Such a one as may be retorted by those who question us; Such a one as may perhaps make more against us then for us? Such a generall one as might be given for any presumption in the world? No, a reason from a cleer distinct knowledge of the peculiar grounds, and experi-
men-

mentall sense of those encouraging
foretasts of our incorruptible
hopes by the Gospell : which
though it cannot convince such
Hereticks and Infidells as examine
us, because the God of this world
hath closed their eyes ; yet it may
strengthen us to possesse our souls
in patience, and to hold fast our
confidence, which hath such great
recompences of reward in sight
of all the terrours of Men or Di-
vels.

Use. 1. To admonish every
man here present with all speed
and diligence to commune with
his owne heart, and to examine
whether he be as yet come out of
his customary love unto Christ
into a spirituall, or no. Beloved,
we are all confident that we love
Christ Jesus, and if one should in
earnest tell us we did not love him
we should take it as ill, and inter-

pret it as if he told us we were damned. Seeing then all our glorious hopes of a better life are built upon this supposition, that we are the true disciples of Christ as we would not be called to after-reckonings at that solempne day of accounts, or have a flaw found in our evidence which should eternally dash our expectation, even then when we should take possession; as we would not have our hopes to vanish in amazement and confusion at that terrible day, when it shall be too late to recall or rectify any thing which hath been formerly amiss; as we would not have our confident conceits of Christs love unto us, and ours unto him give us the slippe at the hour of death, when we should have most use of them, and leave us to a fearfull expectation of judgement; Let us, I say, if we have

have any regard or sense of those things, deal ingenuously with our owne soules, and impartially examine what better ground we have for that supposition, which upholds all our welliare, then such as I have demonstrated to be miserably insufficient. Christians we are all by education, by countrey & custome, by conformity unto laws and fashions: but is this all? have we proceeded no farther? why this will advantage us no more for heaven then that we are Englishmen. All this is but the outside of Christianity, Christianity thrust upon us by our naturall birth before we were aware of it, and settled on faster by custome, and as it were rivited in while we perhaps never thought of it. What saith the Apostle Rom. 2. 28. *He is not a Jew which is one in the outward*

wardly. What not he a Jew which is borne and bred a Jew ? yea he is a Jew in all outward visible respects whatsoever. But all these will give him no title to those everlasting promises, which are made unto *Abraham* and his seed according to the faith : He is no Jew in respect of them. In like manner he is no Christian, who is but outwardly one: who slides insensibly to himself into the visible garbe of Christianity, by naturall generation. He only is a Jew who is one ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ. In the secrets of his heart, and he only is a Christian, who hath been made one by a second birth of his soul, invisible to others, but admirably sensible unto himself, being borne not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, as *S. John* fully expresseth it, *Chap. 1 . v. 13*. Well then

then, if thou wouldst not be mistaken in thy self, if thou wouldst be ascertained whether or no thou lovest Christianity upon any other motives then such as nature and custome may suggest. First of all look back upon the estate of thy soul ever since thou hast been able to remember. Reflecting thus upon so much of thy life as is gone, canst thou not remember a time wherein thy self being judge, thou didst but dissemble with thy Saviour; when thou thoughtst of him but very seldome, and then not perfunctorily, without any heat of affections; when thou tookest not much to heart any thing he hath done for thee, when thou tookest no conscionable care to live unto him, because he had died for thee. Reflecting thus upon the time past, canst thou not discern but that thy love unto
Christ

Christ hath been spun out in an even thread even from the cradle untill now, but that the pulse of thy affections unto him hath alwayes beaten much after the same manner, without any notable variation. In a word, canst thou not remember but that thou hast loved him alwayes as well, if not better, then thou hast in the latter time of thy life past. I say if the case be thus with thee, its a thousand to one but thou lovest him onely upon that deceivable ground, which I have laboured to discover.

To direct a little farther in this examination. Suppose the winde which now sits in thy back, and kindly blowes thee on towards Christ, should turne upon a sudden, and furiously bluster in thy face. Suppose those lawes and customs which hitherto have en-
coura-

couraged thee to proceed in Christianity, should command thee back again, and tell thee they were mistaken. Suppose all the men thou knowest or hearest of, should change the fashion of their religion, & leave thee as much alone, as *Elias* once thought himself to have been; and holy *Athanasius* was, when he held up against a world of *Arrians*; I say, if the πῶν ἐπέχον τὴν γνώσιν that special excellency of the knowledge of Christ, which made *S. Paul* to count all things dung, that he might win Christ, hath not furnished thee with unanswerable reasons, why these supposalls should not pull thee back, its a plain case, that only the opposite encouragements set thee forward. To be brief, art thou not sure that thou hast such special peculiar reasons for thy religion, as could not have
 suf.

suffered it, much lesse have caused thee upon any supposalls to. have been of any other? Hast thou not with an inlightned understanding espied in Christ Jesus those unparalleled transcendencies, which put an infinitely vast difference between him and those many Antichrists in the World? Lastly, hast thou not at some time or other, in some measure had thy conscience convicted of sin, revived with such gracious influences distilling from his lovely countenance, & refreshed with such words of eternall life from him, as thou knowest (go whether thou wilt) cannot be expected from any one else? If thy heart answer no, to these interrogatories, assure thy self thou knowest not yet what this means to love Christ? I should but flatter thee to tell thee thou artt a christian, yea I should in some sort mocke

mocke thee, by giving thee a glorious title, which if thou continue as thou art, will no way benefit thee, yea it will not only keep thee out of heaven, but sinke thee deeper into Hell. Give glory unto God that thou livest in a time and place where thou hast all encouragements opportunities, invitations to be more entirely acquainted with thy Saviour, and to grow as intimate with him, as any man else, but for the present be content to consider that thy love of him hitherto hath been built upon a rotten foundation; give no rest unto thy self, untill thou hast learned to love thy Saviour upon such inducements as he would have thee, even because he hath loved thee. Give not over importuning the spirit of grace to *direct thy heart into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Christ,*

Christ, as the Apostle divinely
 prayes for the *Thess. 2. Ep. 3. 5.*
 Give not over I say, untill thou
 hast attained unto all riches of the
 full assurance of understanding, to
 the acknowledgement of the mystery
 of God, and of the Father, and of
 Christ, as the same Apostle sweetly
 prayes for the *Colossians 2. 2.*

Use 2. Let me bespeake all
 such, as by the tender mercies of
 God melting their hearts, have
 been made partakers of the hea-
 venly calling, and begotten again
 unto a lively hope, let me I say, if
 there be any consolation in
 Christ, if any fellowship of the Spi-
 rit, if any bowels and mercies, let
 me beseech them to take two
 things deeply to heart. First, the
 infinite dishonour which is done
 unto Christ, the author and fi-
 nisher of our faith, by the custo-
 mary profession of his glorious
 name

name and Gospel in this King-
 dome. Its above threescore years
 since the Saviour of the World
 hath vouchsafed after a most espe-
 ciall manner to reside amongst us
 early and late, to call and cry un-
 to us, to take notice what need
 we have of him, to bethink our
 selves of our infinite wants, which
 none but he can supply, counsel-
 ling us as he did the Church of
 Laodicea to buy of him gold tried
 in the fire, that we may be rich,
 & white raiment that our naked-
 nesse might not appear an eye-
 salve, that now in this our day we
 might see those things which be-
 long unto our peace, and all this
 without mony: now that after
 all this there should be thousands
 amongst us, who being asked a rea-
 son of the hope that is in them, can-
 not speak tolerable sense, why they
 are Christians rather than profes-
 sed

sed Infidels ; that there should be whole parishes which cannot afford one wise word to ward the defence of our most holy profession ; that many who will take it very ill if they are not accounted as good Christians as the best, should think no otherwise of Christ, then some do of S. *Patrick*, and S. *David*, and other of the Saints of their countrey. Lastly, that those great and precious promises which Christ hath purchased for us, with the unvaluable price of his own dearest blood, by those who one day think to have their share in them, that they set as slothfull, ignorant, heartles affections upon them, as professed infidells do upon those poor, imaginary, deluding hopes, which Satan is permitted to abuse them with, questionlesse it becomes not any man, who hath

re-

resolved the rest of his time in the
flesh to seek the things of Christ
Jesus, and hath felt in his own soul
what good reason he hath for it,
I say it becomes not any such to
think of these things which grate
so mercilessly upon his Savionrs
wounds, and even make them
bleed a fresh, with sighs and
groanes, a bleeding heart and a
great deal of secret mourning. Be-
tween the millions of men who
hate the redeemer of the world,
and the multitude which love him
they know not wherefore, O how
few are there which love him in
sincerity! The second thing which
I would intreat of those who un-
derstand what a wofull thing it is
to be a stranger unto Christ, to
be yet unreconciled unto God by
him, is, that they would with
yearning bowels commiserate the
lamentable condition of their poor
igno-

ignorant brethren which they shall meet with every where, especially in most countrey Villages,

I have observ'd upon occasions much tablemerriment which hath been made by tales which passe about of such absurd, senselesse answers as ffly Christians have given, being demanded a reason of their faith, perhaps upon their death-bebs, or at their comming to the Lords table. Let such unnaturall mirth be farre from those who are to strive to have the same minds in them, which was in Christ Jesus. You, who by the blessed change wrought in your souls, have passed from death unto life, consider with a thankfull reflection upon the Father of lights, that had not he you h saved you a more ingenuous education, fairer opportunities to grow acquainted with the mysteries of grace,

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more distinct calls of his sanctifying Spirit; and more illuminated apprehensions to discern them; you might have groped and stumbled in a thicker mist of stupidity than now befools your unenlightened brethren; you might have dishonoured that blessed name by which you are called, by as wild misconceits and horrid follies, as any come from them, and whatsoever is ridiculous in them might have been more prodigious in you; know what price to set upon your own souls: You know the soul of the meanest idiot is of equall value with yours, and that it cost the redeemer of the World as many stripes and wounds as yours; O then pitty thy brethren so likely to perish, for whom Christ died, yea the rather, because they being stuffed with sottish conceits, will be ready to laugh at those

those who shall pittie them : Take all opportunities to do them some spirituall good, as occasion shall be offered, conferring with them and praying for them : and let Christian sympathies be the least you can afford them; you know what you mean, when you pray daily that Gods kingdome may come; remember, you pray not in earnest, unlesse you do your faithfull endeavour to help it forward, as in your own hearts, so in the hearts of your brethren, with which at any time you converse. Consider I beseech you, what a dimmall fogge of Popery doth yet darken this lland, Popery which few think of, I mean that blind absurd implicite faith of beleiving as the Church believes. For there is not a pin to choose between him that believes in grosse what the Church of England believes,

and

and him that believes as that Synagogue of Satan the Church of Rome believes, it neither knowes any thing explicitly what either Church believes. Meditate on this, and what zeal, what courage, what indignation you feel in your breasts against the Antichristian impostures of Rome, let them fly I beseech you upon all occasions, against this Protestant Popery. But I see no hope but that the Colliars faith will have the greatest number of professors, whilst accurate Catechizing of all sorts of people, which did so much good in the primitive Church, is in ours so generally neglected. But I conclude, bespeaking you in the words of *S. Jude*, *But yee beloved building up your selves on your most holy faith, praying in the holy Ghost. Keep your selves in the love of God, looking for the mercies of our Lord Jesus*

Jesus Christ unto eternall life: And of some have compassion making a difference. And others save with feare, pulling them out of the fire: hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

O thou Father of mercies and God of all consolations, look down from thy throne of eterni-ty, and take notice of us thy poor servants, who do now desire to muster up all the faculties which thou hast given us, and to employ them in an acceptable thanksgiving unto thee. O Lord we desire to spend our best spirits, even to exhale our dearest souls in thankful ejaculations unto thee for that most incomprehensibly admirable contrivance of our salvation by the peath of the Son of thy love: O Lord we desire to be transported with a holy amazement, as often as we think of this mystery
of

of mysteries, and even to empty
our hearts of their secrets in hal-
lujahs, and voices of exaltation.
Most holy Lord, wee praise thee
for the marvelous light of thy
Gospel, which hath acquainted
us with those wonders of mercy,
which thy Christ hath performed
for our soules, for those comfor-
table evidences of our justification
by him, with which our bruised
consciences have been most gra-
tiously revived. We praise thee
likewise for those wonders of a
new creation which thy blessed
spirit hath begun in our hearts,
for that it hath begun to weaken
and wast the body of sin, to cru-
cify those corruptions, which
heretofore have been most inso-
lent in us, to wean us from those
vanities, which heretofore have
been our chief comforts, and to
make us more willing to be kept
F within

within a holy compasse. O Lord we desire, we desire with most enlarged hearts, to blesse thy infinite goodnesse, for all those ravishing irradiations and glorious Prefaces of our blessed immorality, by which thy comforting spirit hath so often encouraged us to patient continuance in well doing. We blesse thee for all the heavenly thoughts, affections, desires, and resolutions, which thou hast put into us at any time; we praise thee for that portion of thy good word, which thou hast afforded us at this time: O thou that delightest to pardon abundantly, pardon all the errours and imperfections which have come either from me in delivering, or any of thy people in entertaining thy message: Let it not be a savour of death unto death, unto any man who hath been within the sound
of

of it, but let it some way or other be beneficiall unto him, in respect of thy kingdome. And now oh thou that dwellest in unapproachable splendor, quite out of the ken of mortality, seeing thou hast suffered dust & ashes to approach so neer to thee in thy ordinances, dismiss not any one of us, we beseech thee, without a blessing; send not away any one of us without a comfortable beam of thy countenance shining into his heart; Thou art the fountain of holinesse, send us not therefore out of thy presence without some more cleernesse in our apprehensions of thy saving mysteries, and heavenlinesse in our affections unto them. Send us not from thy throne of grace; but with a heavenly calme in our souls, or with such tempests of repentance, as may prepare us for an everlasting serenity, O Lord send

us not away but either with that joy which passeth all understanding, or that Godly sorrow which may prepare us for it. To thee O Father with thy beloved Sonne and blessed Spirit, three most glorious Persons, and one infinite Deity, be ascribed all Honour, Power, Praise, Might, Majestie, and Dominion, by us poor sinners here militant on earth, and all the glorified companies triumphant in Heaven, from this time forth for evermore. *Amen.*

THE

THE TRIAL

Of our sincere love to

C H R I S T.

Ephes. 6. Vers. 24.

*Grace be with all them that love our
Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.*

I WILL not discourage
your attention with tedious
repetition of what I
have heretofore in another
audience delivered upon this
Scripture : something must needs
be recalled to guide your attention
into the ensuing discourse, and
to knit that unto the former : but
I will not trouble you with a
word more, then the necessity of
methode shall enforce me unto.
To winde up then as much as is
necessary in a brief introduction.

We live in an age of a Pre-

sumption as peremptory as universall : they are rare men that make any question of their salvation, and which is most to be pitied; they are for the most part such as have least reason. I am perswaded, there was never yet any time when men were generally more confident in their hope of heaven, or lesse able to give a wise reason for it; insomuch, that it may be but too probably conjectured, that to one that perishes through despaire, there miscarry hundreds through presumption.

This generall presumption stands upon these two generall suppositions. 1. That Grace, that is, all the gracious, precious promises of God, concerning a better life, do infallibly appertain to all such as love Christ Jesus in sincerity; that is, to all such as are true, serious, resolute Christians.

2. That

2. That we our selves are all such men, that we are all Christians good enough to serve the turne, though we are not so forward and exemplary, though we keep not such stir with our profession as some others do. The first supposition is out of all question, and can never be brought into disputation by those, which submit to the Scriptures, it being the scope, not only of my text, but also of the whole Gospell, yea of the Law and the Prophets. So that (with reverence be it spoken) it shall be as possible for God, that is the eternall truth it self, to ly, as for that supposition to fail any man, who observing the conditions of it, casts himself upon it: so that in strict propriety of speech, it is not of it self any prop of presumption, but only by accident, as it's subject to mis-application.

us. Well then, presumption stands more directly, and leans more heavily upon the second supposition, and therefore all our care must be every man for himself, to see that we are not mistaken in our account at home, to be sure we are all such men as we deeme our selves to be, that is, such Christians, as may upon good sufficient grounds lay clayme unto, & plead interest in all the glorious promises in Christ Jesus.

Upon this I observed, all the conditions required on our part, and by consequent, the whole triall of our assurance, to be comprised in this sincerity of our love towards him; and farther, for the exact triall, and through examination of this, I imposed upon my self the handling of three most considerable points, which make up it self, and evidence unto us the since-

sincerity of our love unto Christ.

1. The true immediate ground, or originall of it. 2. The requisite degree or intention of it. 3. The especiall fruits and effects of it.

Concerning the originall of our love unto Christ, amongst many insufficient deceivable grounds of it, I undertook the discovery of one, which I found to be most dangerous and universall: to wit, naturall instincts of religion in generall, restrained to Christianity by birth and education. This discovery I have already elsewhere at large, as God enabled me, performed. In the second place, I promised a declaration of the true, proper, and sure ground of sincere love unto Christ: and this by the assistance of the blessed spirit, you shall have paid at this time.

Well then, what is the most im-

The
ground
of a
Christi-
ans love
to Christ.

mediate and proper ground of the sincere love of a poor sinner unto his Saviour Jesus Christ? I answer out of the question, when in earnest he finds himself to be a miserable sinner, and apprehends Christ Jesus to be his gracious Saviour, and one of whom he stands in infinite need. Or to deliver it more fully, It is a clear, distinct, particular, tender apprehension of his own infinite wants and miseries by reason of sin, and of those miracles of love and mercy, which Christ hath performed to cure these and supply those, and that as freely and purposely for him as for any man else.

To clear and confirme this excellent point, I will, as God hath directed my meditations.

1 First prove it to be so.

2 And then demonstrate why it is so.

That

That it is so, appears by sundry places of holy Scripture, out of which I will cull some few, which seem to me most pregnant and pertinent. First, *I love the Lord*, saith holy David Psalm. 116. 1. *marke his reason; because he hath heard my voyce and my supplications.* But what kind of supplications were these? upon what occasion were they made? you may see both, v. 3, 4. *The sorrowes of death compassed me about, and the pains of hell got hold upon me: then called I upon the name of the Lord, O Lord I beseech thee deliver my soul.* These were my supplications, which the Lord hath heard, and therefore I love him; yea, because he hath inclined his ear unto me in these my spirituall agonies, I will call upon him as long as I live.

2 we have an eminent place, *Job. 1. 19. We love him, marke his reasons;*

son ; *because he first loved us*. True, some may say , God hath loaded us with innumerable expressions of his love in our creation and preservation , and we do reciprocally love him for them ; but what's this to the love of Christ ? To omit as impertinent to this place , that in some sort we owe both our creation and temporall preservation unto Gods love in Christ, seeing it is not probable , but the whole frame of nature should have been dissolved presently upon the fall , had not God of his mercy intended a Redeemer for mankind to be revealed in the fulnesse of time : but to let this passe ; *S. John* in these words , *because he first loved us*, understands that love of loves , that boundlesse , incomprehensible love of God , wherewith he hath loved us in Christ : as it plainly appears
by

by comparing the 9. & 10. verses. In *this*, (that is) in this infinitely more, then in any mercy of creation or preservation, was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his onely begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him. *Herein is love* (that is) herein infinitely more then in any thing else, *not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* To recollect, and to bring it home to the point in hand; when as the same S. John speaks, v. 16. *We have known and believed the love that God hath to us, when we find our selves to have been even dead men, and that God sent his Son, that we might live through him: when we perceive our selves overloden with sins, and that Christ was sent purpose-ly to be a propitiation for them;*

O here is the true originall of our love unto him, now we love him, because he *first* loved us. A third place, and I'll trouble you with no more, is *Luke 7. 37.* where we have a whole parable to this purpose, delivered by our Saviour himself, to make the Pharisees understand what that poor woman meant by those strange, distracted and seemingly madde expressions of her love unto him, in washing his feet with tears, and wiping them with her hair, &c. The parable is of a Creditor and his two debtors; I need not repeat it, most of you knowe it already, others may peruse it if they please. The application of it is, that then sinners do indeed fall in love with their Saviour, when they perceive themselves to be over head and ears, as we say, in debt unto God, and themselves

most

most unable to discharge one farthing, when they feel that God begins to put his bond in suite, which they had forfeited long before they were borne, when he sends an arrest for them by the terrours of his Law, their own consciences, and the spirit of bondage. Lastly, when they feel themselves even haled towards that prison, from which never any man came out, which was once in, and then most opportunely comes in Christ Jesus with his merits, satisfies his father to the full, rescues them out of the sergeants hands, *that they being delivered out of the hands of their enemies may serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the dayes of their life.* Indeed the condition of the application *vers. 47.* seems to thwart and unsay all that which I have said: *Her sins which*

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are forgiven her, because shee loved much, I deny not, but the words, as they are, admit a pious sense; neither am I ignorant with how little adoe they may be reconciled, which have been hitherto spoken.

The ordinary translation corrected.

But if I might be worthy to deliver mine own opinion, with due respect unto the translators, I would alter one word in the translation, which I suspect should run thus: *Her sins which are many are forgiven, therefore she hath loved much.* The sense requires this construction. 1. Because the whole scope of the parable is to shew, that he loves most to whom most is forgiven; and not contrarily, that most is forgiven to him that loves most. 2. The Antithesis in the same verse requires it; the words, but to whom little is forgiven he loveth little, suppose this Thesis,

Thesis, because many sins are forgiven her shee loveth much. Now as the sense requires this interpretation, so the conjunction *et* admits it: for albeit not in the pure Greek *idiom*, yet in the Hellenistlike use of it, it answers to all the acceptions of the Hebrew *ו* which hath sometimes the signification of *ideo*, *quapropter*, &c. Neither may it prejudice this interpretation, that our Saviour after all those expressions of love from the penitent woman, and his Apologie for himself and her to the Pharisee, tells her, that her sins are forgiven her: this was but that sentence of absolution for her greater comfort and assurance outwardly pronounced, of which no doubt but she had before some gracious inklings within, and the vertue of which she had already tested, though not in that comfortable

forable measure, or distinct manner as she desired.

But now I would not willingly be mistaken in the point, as if my opinion were, or I intended to prove out of the afore-cited places, that there is no true love unto Christ, but what is grounded upon an actuall perswasion of the remission of our sins by him. Alas how many poor souls evē languish with a spirituall thirst after him! how many bleeding hearts both feel and epresse most vehement pangs of importunate love towards him! how many broken spirits even spend and exhale themselves in continuall fallies as it were, and egressions of affection unto him, who have indeed heard, but not as yet tasted how gracious he his; who have not as yet perceived in themselves those inward whisperings of comfort,

Fear

Fear not, I am thy salvation: be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee: in a word, who have not as yet felt themselves sealed to the day of redemption by that holy spirit of promise!

To rescue the truth out of these clouds, and to present it in her brightnesse unto you, we must first observe, that every degree of true spirituall love unto Christ, proceeds from a proportionable act of saving faith: Secondly, that there is a twofold love. 1. One of desire, which is an earnest longing after that, which we believe would do us much good, if we could attain unto it: 2. Another of complacencie, when having attained that we desire, we hugge, and embrace it, and solace our selves in the fruition of it. Now as ordinarily in the love of any other object: so likewise if we

we respect Christ Jesus, the first of these loves is the introduction to the second; and both of them issue from a proportionable act of faith precedent. That affectionate longing and thirstie love wherewith we pant and gaspe after Christ, having never yet been refreshed with any comfortable testimony of the Spirit since the beginning of our humiliation, proceeds frō that former act of faith, whereby we assent unto all the Gospell promises as most true and good in themselves, and infinitely better unto us then any thing in the World, could we be once assured that they belong unto us as well as to other men. That other love of complacencie, when with the *Psal.* we returne unto our rest, because the Lord hath dealt bountifully with us, and sweetly repose our selves in the
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lap of our Saviour, with content unspeakable and full of glory, proceeds from that last act of faith, whereby we are actually perswaded by those welcome whispers of the spirit of adoption, that Christ is as certainly our Saviour as any mans else, and that our debts (as infinite as they were) are cancelled to a farthing, as well as the smaller summes of others.

Lastly, it will not be amisse to observe two things of this love of complacency, arising from a perswasion of Christs love unto us in particular. I. It's subject to all variations and changes, ebbings and flowings of that perswasion. For as often as in any violent temptation, or sensible desertion, our perswasion seemes to be confuted, this love of complacency is either for a time quite stupified, or else it falls back as it were into
that

that thirsty anxious love of desire.

2. This love of complacency admits degrees proportionably to the degrees of that perswasion. If that be clear and strong, this love is more cheerfull and pleasant: if that be weak and obscure, this love is not so sprightfull, but somewhat lumpish, being cold with many fears and jealousies. Whence this love of complacency may not unfitly be subdivided. 1. Into Ordinary love, which proceeds from a weaker degree of that last act of faith, and though sincere, yet being imperfect, is mixed with anxiety in the same proportion as that is with doubting. And 2. into Heroicall love, which springeth from a more eminent and transcendent pitch of perswasion concerning our own reconciliation in particular: this is that perfect love, which *S. Iohn* sayes, casteth
out

Faith
may be
sincere
though
mixed
with
Anxiety.

out all fear (to wit) of distrust, bringing us into a more intimate familiarity with God. I call the first Ordinary, because most Christians though effectually called do ordinarily feel but such a timorous love in themselves. The second, which I call Heroicall, in that sense in which eminent virtues have their Epithite, is constantly only in such as either beside the evidence of the word and spirit, have had some special revelation to put them out of all doubt concerning their estate to Godward, or such as by a constant close walking with God, have been long exercised in a Christian course, have often entertained Christ Jesus at supper in their hearts, and habituated themselves into a more familiar acquaintance with that holy spirit which brings all the good newes from

Constancy in a Christian course, frequent tastes of Christs love, and the Testimony of the spirit assure us of our Salvation.

from heaven to those diligent souls, which carefully wait for it.

Thus have I according to the skill that is given mee, proved the originall of the sincere love of a sinner unto Christ Jesus blessed for ever, to be a serious tender apprehension of his own extreame need of Christ, and of Christs superabundant love unto him: I have likewise explained this truth, and vindicated it from such exceptions as crossed my way. I come now to discover the demonstrative reason of this truth, and after I have shewed that it is so, to shew you now why it must be so.

The second
part of
the text

Wee are all borne into the World *sinners*, haters of God, and while wee continue in that naturall stupid condition wherein we were born, *wee are all strangers both unto God and Christ, yea,*

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enemies in our mindes through
wicked workes as the Apostle
speaks. Col. 1. 21. We retaine in-
deed some obscure cloudy notions
of a God, but not the darkest inti-
mations of a Saviour, or least sur-
spition of any need we have of
one. In a word, albeit wee are
borne and bred within the shril-
lest sound of the Gospell, yet as
long as we continue $\psi\chi\iota\sigma\mu\iota$ meeke
animall, naturall men, it will not
sink into our heads, that we are in
such miserable case as Preachers
would make us believe wee are,
how ill its like to go with us, un-
lesse we laboriously enquire after
Christ, and get to be reconciled
unto God by him. Now what
more effectuall method can we
imagine to beat us out of this na-
turall antipathy against our Crea-
tor and Redeemer? yea what o-
ther contrivance may there be to

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134 *The triall of a Christians*

work such peevish wretches, such froward rebels out of one extreame into another, out of deadly hatred to sincere love of the eternall Father and his onely Son, to pull down their proud stomackes, to make them crouch and craule unto his throne of grace, then to make them see in what a hell they are while they stand in this distance from him, to awake their consciences against them, and to make them a terrour unto themselves, to let the Law thunder and lighten into their souls untill their wits and spirits begin to fail them, and then amidst all these amazing tempests to let the glorious Gospell of Christ shine upon them, to shew them Christ Jesus with his armes of mercy stretched out, and undertaking to free them out of all these confusions, and to make their peace

The
curses of
the Law
drive
us to
Christ.

peace with his Father if they will but come unto him, & trust themselves with him, if they will but lay to heart, and learn to esteeme and admire those wonders of redemption which he hath compassed for them? Had the Prodigall Sons stock held out, and he lyen still afloat in the full tide of his sinfull pleasures, he had set up his staffe in that farre countrey, and quite forgot that he ever had a father: yea when the tide was gone, and had left him upon the sands: when the revells were ended, his bravery quite worn out into beggery, and himself preferred to be an attendant of a company of hogs, if he could but have got his belly full of huskes he would hardly have thought of returning home: but when these were denyed him, and he could see nothing but death before him,

O now he comes to himself, and begins to think of a father he had and resolves to go unto him, though he might well suspect his entertainement. Well, whatsoever that may prove, he is sure he goes to a father, and therefore on he goes, and when he was yet a farre off, full of aboding fears, and disconsolate musings, behold his father about his neck before he was aware of him, acting an overjoyed man, he hangs about him and kisses him, trimes him up with a robe and a ring, conducts him home in a kind of triumph, and welcomes him with the solemnity of a feast and musicke. Here was a change for the prodigall, enough to have turned his brains as we say, but sure it could not but turn his heart. Had that been of marble or adamant, this could not but melt it into love. O what

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a swelling, a thronging, a wrestling did he now feel in his bowels of tendrest passions, impatient for want of expression! O how did he now lay about him with tears of sorrow and tears of joy, being much puzzled, whether it would best become to prosecute his joy most, or his sorrow: in brief, how mad is he with himself that he had been such a Son to such a Father!

I have insisted the longer upon the prodigals case, because indeed it is our own. For ordinarily, our heavenly father useth the same method to fetch us his prodigall Children home unto him, and to bring us in love with his beloved Son Jesus Christ. We are all as soon as we are born gotten into a farre countrey, where we mispend, and misemploy all those faculties and endowments, with

which our Creator hath furnish-
 ed us, in the revels of sin and vani-
 ty, walking on merrily and confi-
 dently *μετὰ τῆ αἰῶνα τῆ κοσμοῦ τούτου*, as
 the Apostle speaks *Eph. 2. 2.* *ac-
 cording to the course of this World :*
 professing indeed (for fashion sake)
 love both unto God and Christ,
 but all the while denying and dis-
 claiming them both in our hearts
 and conversations. But *God who is
 rich in mercy for his great love
 wherewith he hath loved us, Ephes.
 2. 4.* when he hath let us runne
 our selves even out of breath in
 these riotous courses, and even ty-
 red our selves in our journey to
 Hell, thinks it fit to stop our pro-
 gresse, and first to make us under-
 stand our selves, that we may the
 better esteeme of him, and whom
 he hath sent Jesus Christ. First
 then he inspires us with so much
 spirituall life, as may make us feel
 our

our spirituall burden; consisting of our sins, and his curses due unto them, he raises up many affrightments, and grim apparitions in our consciences, he gives Satan leave to insult over us; whatsoever outward contentment we fasten on, to put us out of these dumpes, he beats us off from it, he leaves us not huskes to feed on, he drives us out of one shift into another, till at last we are driven out of all, and so farre, that we see plainly, there is but one way with us, even to perish everlastingly, unlesse we can get to be reconciled unto him. Now we begin to come to our selves, and perceiving our only course which we have left, to be, to cast our selves upon Gods mercy, but not getting near unto that, unlesse his justice be first satisfied, no possibility of that on our parts, unlesse we can get the

Gods justice must be satisfied ere we can obtain his mercy.

satisfaction of Christ imputed unto us, finding the Scriptures so peremptory, that there is *no coming to the Father, but by the Son, that he that hath the Son hath life, but he that hath not the Son, hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him, Joh. 3. 30.* O now we begin to see it was to some purpose, that we have heard Preachers talke so much of Christ; now we begin to hearken better after him, to value and admire him; now we wonder how we could endure to be without him so long, that we could think so slightly of him heretofore; now those holy fits of love grow upon us apace, and upon a suddain, with the *Spouse in the Canticles, we are sicke of love.* Now are we entred into the love of desire, and while our poor souls are sweating in these restlesse passions, we hear at length
Christ

SINCERE
Christ Jesus in a milde still voice,
inviting all such as are weary and
heavy laden to come unto him,
that he may give them rest: upon
this we addresse our selves to-
wards him, with our burden up-
on our shoulder, and when we
are got within ken of him, he
seems sometimes to go backward
from us, to make us more eager
after him, and thus oft-times he
lets us stand trembling and shak-
ing, weeping and groaning under
our burdens, till we are even sink-
ing and swooning under them,
and then he conveyes them away,
cleares up the heavens over us,
speaks like a Husband unto our
souls by his Spirit, he presents us
unto his Father, who now smiles
upon us with a reconciled coun-
tenance; and then unto his An-
gels, who amongst all their *Halle-
lujahs*, receive some addition un-
to their triumphant mirth by our

There
are Reall
tasts of
the be-
nefits
procured
by Christ
in the
hearts of
true be-
lievers.

conversion. Now no man need tell us what Christ hath done for us, we feel real experiments of all in our own hearts, now we have seen, and felt, and tasted how infinitely he hath loved us, we are ready to make our boast of it, and with the *Psalmist*, to invite all such as fear God purposely that we may declare unto them what he hath done for our souls. Now we are in that love of complacency, now wee cling unto him, and would fain come out of our selves, to creep unto him, affecting not only a union, but unity with him; now we bestirre our selves in all the holy complements of heavenly love, never thinking wee have done enough, frequently bathing our selves in those delicious intimacies of our spirituall marriage, which how much they passe all understanding, I appeal to their

ex-

experiences, to whom these things are no Paradoxes.

You see the excellent contrivance, by which our stubborn rebellious hearts are wrought over unto the sincere love of Jesus Christ: I suppose it now expedient to clear this discourse of the originall of unfained love, from some boubts and scruples which may arise from it.

I. Whether none can love Christ in sincerity, but those that are brought unto it by this method? I answer, not one ordinarily, if his conversion be wrought by the Ministry of the Word. The reason is plain out of what hath been delivered. We are to love Christ as a Saviour: how can we be brought to that, untill we feel our selves lost, and understand what need we have of a Saviour? We are to love him as a Media-

The sense of our own misery makes us in love with Christ as a Saviour.

tour:

tour: what reason is there for this, unlesse we first plainly perceive God to be our enemy? Lastly, we are to love him as our Physitian: What sense is there for that, if we feel not our selves in some danger, if we feel no aches or gripings, no smart about our souls, if we find no good that Christ hath done us or can do us? Himself tells us, *the whole have no need of the Physitian; onely the sicke*; such as feel and acknowledge themselves to be sicke, will make use of him. But here it's requisite to observe, that the severall passages of this great alteration wrought in our affections, are more or lesse sensible, according to the severall conditions of the persons. We are all prodigalls, yet some more, some lesse: we are all gone into a farre countrey, yet some rove a great deal father then others: For illustra-

lustration, some have had a more
restraining education then others,
and been trained up in a more in-
nocent civility, untill the time of
their visitation, which oftentimes
overtakes them very early, -and
takes them in before they are ac-
quainted with the villanies of the
World, or vices of the times :
such, though commonly they take
a weeping crosse in their way too,
as they come home unto Christ,
yet they passe not through so ma-
ny pikes, so many panges, and ter-
rours, but with lesse stirre and dif-
ficulty arrive safely at his bosome,
and get within his embraces. On
the other side, some are starke
prodigalls, meer Publicans, such
as have taken their full swinge in
the wildest exorbitancies, such as
have served an apprenticeship, per-
haps two or three to the World,
the Flesh, and the Divell ; such as
these,

these, when it pleaseth God to put his hook in their nostrils, to turn them round, and make them look towards heaven, are brought to the love of Christ, even steppe by steppe in that method which I have formerly described. The other are also brought unto the love of Christ, but these being once brought unto it, love him more vehemently; for it's certain, *he loves most to whom most is forgiven.*

Whether our love to Christ would not be more exact if we did consider the brightnesse of his glory.

2. Doubt, Whether our love unto Christ would not be more pure and acceptable unto him, if it arose from an exact, steddy contemplation of those infinitely amiable excellencies, and transcendent beauties, which are resplendent in his person? *he being the brightnesse of glory, and the expresse image of his Father, Heb. 1. 3.* or as it is *vers. 7, 26. The brightnesse of the ever-*

everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodnesse.

I answer by proposing three brief considerations: 1. That is the truest love of Christ, which beats us out of our naturall enmity against him, & brings us home with longing affection unto him. Now it's most true, that the person of Christ, absolutely considered without the relation of a Saviour unto us, is invested with most attractive excellencies, and ravishing beauties: but if a glimpse of that orient lustre should flash in the face of an unregenerate man, or impenitent sinner, unlesse the sanctifying spirit should at the same instant renew his heart, it might drive him out of his wits, but not out of his sins, it might terrify him into a desperate transe, but not advance him to a kindly extasie.

Christ only considered as a Saviour moves us to love him.

Like-

Likewise if one should go about to win an enemy of grace unto the love of Christ, by the most accurate Metaphysicall discourses of those infinitely superlative beauties in the Deity absolutely considered, either they would be phantasticke riddles unto him, or at leastwise prevail no more with him to that purpose, then it would perswade him to love one dearly, whom he mortally hated, to tell him that he was a comely Gentleman. 2. Suppose the mysticall contemplations were effectual this way, yet he that is yet unacquainted with the power of converting grace, is altogether undisposed to set himself about them. An acute, but unsanctified schooleman may overstrain his understanding with a wearisome gaze upon those invisible beauties, and dazle it into a more distempered

Subtilty
without
the grace
of con-
version
will not

pered ignorance, but not into such a ravishment of love, as may warm and elevate his affections: whereas the penitent soul, which by the grace of conversion hath felt those sacred conjugall affections already kindled in it self, may advantage her self excellently by such contemplations, by her intellectuall aspirings and essayes, as it were, to see him that is invisible, and by refreshing her self with sweetest meditations of those inconceivable glories which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God. So that such contemplations, though they cannot ordinarily begin sincere love unto Christ in our hearts, yet they may keep it up, blow it into a purer flame, and advance it to a degree of Angelicall sublimity.

3. That love of Christ is most sincere and acceptable unto him, which

kindle
the love
of Christ
in our
hearts.

which gives him most glory of that which he desires most to be glorified in : that is, of his goodnesse his attributes, and workes of mercy in our Salvation. He requires not an ayrie, but a fiery love. He respects not so much that speculative love, which consists in a simple amaze of the understanding, or bare admiration of those undiscovered perfections of his nature, which have not as yet done us any good, though one day the sight of them shall be a part of our blessednesse. Christ requires that love of us, whereby we confesse our selves beholding unto him, that love which layes us flat before him; and whereby we acknowledge we owe our selves unto him. I may much admire and applaud a man of excellent parts, for his rare endowments, and yet think my self no more be-

Our love
to Christ
must be
practi-
call.

of beholding unto him, then he is
be to me ; yea I may bear grudges
d. against him in my mind, and be
of farre from any affectionate love
e- towards him : Even so with some
ry Schoolmen, and writers of mysti-
ch call Theologie I may busy my
n- brain, and set my minde a flaring
on upon that absolute *Idea* of unde-
ns filed beauty in the Deity, and yet
as long as I continue unsensible
as of what Christ hath done for my
ne redemption, retain a frozen and a
a flinty heart.

If we love Christ onely because
he hath loved us, it seems that in
our love unto him, we have a
chief eye unto our selves, and that
we love our selves more then him,
which ordinarily cannot be plea-
sing unto him, or any way stand
with sincerity. For answer, we
must distinguish between the im-
pulsive and the finall cause of our
love

The oc-
casion of
our love
to Christ
is our
own sal-
vation,
the end
his glory.

love unto Christ ; or in termes
 somewhat plainer , between the
 first inward occasion of it, and the
 maine scope of it. My care of my
 own soul originally drives me to
 harken after a Saviour, and when
 I have found him, and finde with-
 all, that he hath brought me out
 of myself , *that I am not my own,*
 as it is , 1 Cor. 6. 19. henceforth
 the maine scope and principall
 ayme of my love unto him is to
 do that for which chiefly I was
 created and redeemed , to let go
 all interest in my self, and give him
 his whole right , to glorify him
 both in my body and in my soul , for
 both are his , as it is in the place
 now cited. So that my love unto
 my Saviour albeit it come occa-
 sionally and impulsively from my
 love of my self, yet it is terminated
 principally in his glory , though
 accessorially likewise , as he is con-
 tented

presented it should, in my own happiness, This is excellently illustrated, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. *The love of Christ constraineth us*, saith St. Paul: why so? *Because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then we were all dead: here is that original of our love implied*, which I have so largely insisted upon, it followeth, *and he died for all, that they which henceforth live, should not live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again.* This is the end of Christs love unto us, and must be the business and main drift of our love unto him. So that our love unto Christ, arising from a tender apprehension of his love unto us, is not mercenary, but makes most for his honour, seeing that if he had not prevented us, we should in some sort have stood upon equal termes with him. Lastly, it.

it is his good pleasure, that we should love that most which is best for us, that in which most consists our perfection, if therefore we love him as our perfection, conceiving our selves to be worse then nothing without him, if we remove our selves, as it were, into him, and according to that sweet phrase of the Apostle, *bide our lives with him in God.* Though all this while implicite-ly we love our selves, yet we need not doubt of our sincerity, this is the very love which he requires. St. Pauls love unto him was such as this, *Gal. 2. 20. I live, yet not I, but Christ in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Sonne of God.* marke the reason, and first the inducement to all this, *who hath loved me and given himself for me.* It's time by your patience to come

come to some application.

1. For Examination, to perswade every man that would not cozen himself in this perswasions concerning his spirituall estate, speedily and impartially to examine the love he supposes he bears to Christ Jesus by what we have amply discoursed concerning the true and proper Originall of it. Thou pretendest most entire love unto Christ Jesus, whom thou callest thy Saviour, thou wouldst spit in his face, that should make any serious question of it, thou art confident that thou dost not dissemble with him. Well then, upon this supposall give me leave to sound thy sincerity with these interrogatories. Dost thou remember a time when thou hadst not that love in thy breast which now thou reckonest upon for sound and currant, though thou

Interro-
gatories
to try
our
sincerity.

thou canst not precisely tell when thou got'st it? Canst thou tell upon what occasions, or guesse at the manner how thou attainest it? Wert thou brought unto it by that method which I have discovered, or at least by one somewhat like it? If thy conscience can now answer these proposals affirmatively, why then I hope thou maist pick a great deal of sound comfort out of the precedent discourse which will testifie unto thee that thou lovest Christ upon a true ground, and that therefore, that grace and favour of God, with all the blessings issuing from it, appertaines unto thee, which the Apostle wishes to *all those, which love Jesus Christ in sincerity.* But on the contrary, if thy conscience start at these demands, and begin to fumble at them, making as if it did not under-

derstand them, if they drive thee
to confesse, that thou knowest no
such matter by thy self; why then
my discourse will conclude thy
pretended love unto Christ, to be
but a meer fancy, and thy self for
the present to be but an unhappy
man. To go yet more particular-
ly to work in this examination
according to the method above
proposed. Hast thou been experi-
mentally convinced in thy own
soul in what desperate case thou
art by nature? Hast thou clearly
perceived to be true in thy self
whatsoever the Scriptures tell thee
of the monstrous proneness of
mans heart to any evil, and unto-
wardness to any good? Hast thou
been made to possess *the sins of thy*
youth, as holy Job was? and have
the terrors of God stared thy
guilty conscience in the face, and
frighted it almost into a bloody
H sweat,

sweet , and then hath there appeared as it were an Angell comforting thee ? Hast thou felt thy self a condemned man , and even going to execution , and hath Christ Jesus in the nick stept in with thy pardon both purchased and seald with his own most precious blood ? If thou hast felt either these passages, or some which may serve proportionably instead of them , to be the cause of that which thou professest unto Christ, I dare not question the sincerity of it, least with those , Ezek. 13. *I wound that soul which should not dye, and make the heart of him sad, whom the Lord hath not made sad.* I should wrong thee exceedingly not to believe that Christ is him whom thy soul loveth , and that with S. Pauls constraining love , *a love as strong as death, which many waters cannot quench* neither

neither shall the floods drown it, Cant.8. 7. But now on the contrary, to conclude negatively from the former interrogatories, to inferre the want of sincerity in any man for his not feeling those passages, as they are *verbatim* proposed, would be too rigid, and perhaps raise a tumult in a well-settled conscience: *Onely* thus much I say, if all of them found as riddles and uncouth mysteries unto thee, if thou never knewest any thing like to what was proposed by thy self, as I fear many have not: If thou knowest not what it means to *come heavy laden, poor in Spirit, hungry and thirsty unto Christ*: why then I wonder thou shouldest be so fortiff as to conceive, or impudent as to affirme, that thou lovest Christ, if thou wouldst have us understand thee, that thou lovest

him in sincerity , I do suppose that thou lovest him upon custome , as thou dost the fashion of thy countrey in which thou hast been borne and bred , but so does the greatest part of the World desire him , upon as good a ground as that : so does a Turke love *Mahomet*, one of the basest miscreants that ever was, upon as substantiall a ground as that. But we speak of that transcendent love of him, which cannot possibly be due unto any one else , and which would be most due unto him, though all the lawes and customes in the World should universally conspire to crye it down ; dost thou professe such a love unto him , and knowest not wherefore ? nor upon what occasion thou wert moved unto it ? It would vex a man to the soul, who knowes indeed what it is to love Christ, and how him.

himself was brought unto it, to consider the confident stupidity of multitudes in every place, who will not be put out of their dream, that they meane as lovingly to Christ as any man, when as indeed they are not as yet come so farre as to perceive any proper reason why they should love him, or what reason he hath to expect any love from them. I knowe they will say, they love him because he died for them, and they hope to be saved by him: Alas these are words of course and as soone spoken as any other: they say this, because they were ever taught to say so, and never lived among any that said the contrary. Beloved, it is not the saying of this, or believing it confusedly, like some old story or tradition, will melt our congealed hearts into the love of Christ: No, it must

That
faith
must be
experi-
mentall
which is
the ori-
ginall of
sincere
love.

Caution
against
Cozen-
ing sem-
blances
of Love.

be through distinct feeling of it in our own souls, it must be the experience of this, which makes us enamoured on him, and sets our hearts a mounting towards him in those Seraphicall flames of sanctified affection.

2. The Originall of sincere love unto Christ being discovered, and directions given for self examination concerning it, a second use shall be for Caution against many cozening semblances of love unto Christ, which may make us think a great deal better of our selves then we have reason, which may easily be discovered by trying them by this originall. To instance in some particulars: There is many a Russian in this Kingdome, who if he should hear a *Jew* blaspheming Christ, his blood would quickly be up, he would long to be doing with him, and

and be hardly kept from hacking him in pieces. O what a friend unto Christ will such a man suppose himself to be, he will conceit he hath behaved himself like a Templar, and done him knights service, and a hundred to one, but in this humour, he will call his companions to come and see the zeal which he hath for Christ Jesus. But if there were any such swaggering Zealot in this assembly, I would aske him these questions: Dost thou not think a hot spirited Turke would have fallen as foul upon a Jew, if he had taken him vilifying his Mahomet? Wouldst thou not undergoe as dangerous a quarrell to winne the favour, or please the humour of thy mistresse? Wouldst thou not thy self, or at least dost thou not know some, who will quarrell as sternely about a pipe of Tobacco,

or the pledging of a health? Lastly, hast thou not suffered thy companions to blasphemee Christ in their oathes, perhaps a whole day together, and thy zeal all the while hath been very well contented with it? You see by these questions from what variety of carnall unsanctified motives this seeming plausible zeal may arise: and therefore in all such cases, it much concernes us, to have an eye to the true originall of all duties of love, to consider, not so much what we doe, as what makes us to doe it, and in a word, to judge of our affections, not by the heat, but by the fewell. For a second instance: Many in reading the history of our Saviours life, and considering his sweet debonaire, and unoffensive carriage, and withall, the contradiction of sinners, the insolencie of proud and chur-

Wee
must not
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consider
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hemency
of our
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ons, as
the cause
of it.

churlish miscreants, which he endured with an unimitable patience, will find their hearts ever and anon rising in indignation against the Scribes and Pharisees, and even tenderly sympathizing with our Saviour. These men may presently imagine themselves to be deeply in love with Christ, but they may be miserably mistaken. Let them consult with their own experience, and observe, whether they are not moved to as sensible passions, by the reading of any other story, though prophane, if it be any way proportionable unto the Evangelicall story for occurrences; twenty to one, but they shall finde it so. There is not any good story, either sacred or prophane, but for the most part it drawes the mind of the reader, for the time at least, into some faction. Wherein it's evident,

H 5

that

that such stirrings of the affections, may proceed from a bare historickall faith, joyned with that common ingenuity of nature, which teaches us to adore the heroicall vertues of Worthies, long since deceased, and to commiserate their undeserved disasters. Yea, which is worth observation, they may proceed from this common ingenuity, by the meer working of the fancy, without any historicall belief at all. We finde it by experience in reading amorous stories, or histories of strange adventures, which though we knowe and believe to be fayned, yet oft times, if handsomely contrived, they raise more serious tumults of passions in our mindes, then the most reall stories wee can meet with. Now the reason of it (if my own fancy fail me not) is because the imagination, which hath the same command

Many
passio-
nate po-
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our love
to Christ
may be
the frutes
of a bare
Histori-
call faith
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ty.

mand over the passions, which the Poets have given *Aeolus* over the windes, is it self stirr'd up to sympathize with all such representations, as are exquisitely shaped and limb'd according to it's owne *Ideas* and inward contrivances: and in this case the imagination poring upon the representation it self, so that suite well with it's owne images within, it regards not much, whether it be of an acted truth, or of a possibility, forgetting, as it were, for the present, to distinguish what might have been from what hath been. This observation directs me to a third Instance, with which I will conclude: some perhaps may weep devoutly at a Passion-Sermon, and presently imagine their tears to be distillations of tender affections unto Christ: They may be so, but they may very easily not be so.

Who

Who knowes not, that the charmes of eloquence about any sad argument may easily steal good store of tears from an auditory of women, or of soft natur'd men, Solemne Musick, a good Pavin will doe as much: any lively representation of a Tragicall accident, whether reall or imaginary, will doe as much: amongst those that can be so ill busied, as to sit three or four hours at a Tragedy, some can be so wisely good natur'd too, as to weep heartily at it. You see into what variety of mistakes, offices of love unto Christ may put us, while we consider them loose by themselves, & examine them not by that which ought to be the fundamentall inducement unto them in our hearts: you see how expedient it is to judge of these complementall expressions of love unto our blessed

sed Saviour by our hearts , and
not of our hearts by them ; and
by consequent , you see of what
excellent use this doctrine of the
ground, or originall of our love unto
Christ is. To God the Father , &c.

F I N I S.

Myself in it I have acquainted
you with heretofore, in
this has a long and full
handling of three most conside-
rable points, which both make it
evident and evidence it unto

The true and proper ground
of it, the special reason
of it, and the degree and
The redemptive degree and

LUKE

LUKE 14. 26.

If any man come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, Wife, and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, yea and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple.

Proceed still in my Tract or discourfe, concerning the sincerity of our love unto our blessed Saviour. My method in it I have acquainted you with heretofore, imposing upon my self a copious and full handling of three most considerable points, which both make it up in it self, and evidence it unto us.

1. The true and proper ground or originall of it, the speciall reasons inducing us to love him.
2. The requisite degree and in-

intention of it : how much we are to love him.

3. The especiall effects and testimonies of it , what we are to do because we love him.

The first of these heads I have dispatched already ; having heretofore in another audience discovered the false, and in this congregation the true grounds of our love unto Christ Jesus. I am now false upon the second point , and therein more punctually to enquire, how much we are to love him , which querie our Saviour himself clearly and thoroughly resolves in my Text, *If any man come unto me &c.*

Our Saviour was now in the progresse of his humiliation , going about and doing good. Being on his way, he observes great multitudes thronging and flocking after him , no doubt for various ends,

The occasion of the words.

ends, and upon various motives. This he well knew; and thereupon that they might not dishonour him and deceive themselves by grosse, absurd conceits of a common easinesse for any man to get whatsoever good was to be gotten from him by a little trotting after him, he thought it expedient to let them all know before hand, what they must of necessity resolve upon, if they would follow him to any purpose, and solemnely to forewarne them, what they must trust unto if they made account to get any good by running after him. *If any man will come to me (that is) hoping or desiring to be the better for me in regard of a better life, and hate not his Father and Mother &c. (that is) if he set not so high a price upon his hopes by me, that he bring this resolution with him to part with*

The ex-
plication
of them.

with any thing, which may hinder him from doing me constant, universal service; yea though it be that which otherwise he may most lawfully, and ought most dearly to affect, *he cannot be my Disciple*, he is not qualified either to do me that honour which I shall expect from him, or to receive those favours which he will expect from me. If any man, desirous of a more satisfying expectation of this Scripture, shall enquire yet more particularly, in what sense the Disciple of Christ must hate his parents and Children, wife and kindred, yea and his own life.

I answer. The Law of God doth not only permit, but also command us to love all these, and to embrace them with the sweetest, dearest affections, that nature can possibly stirre up in our breasts.

breasts and bowels; Farre be it from our Saviour to contradict this law by requiring that his Disciples at their very first entrance into the school, should turne barbarous, and strip themselves of those sacred, decent affections of nature and humanity: that which he requires is this; that seeing even during the true Church there will daily happen many cases, wherein we must needs either deal unkindly or dishonourably with him, or break squares with such as are neer and dear unto us, and in time of persecution we may be so put to it, that we must either be ashamed of him before men, and in the extremity of basenesse adjure him, or else part with our temporall life and all contentments; I say he requires that his Disciples should come with mindes so possessed with an extraordinary o-

ver-

verreaching esteem of him beyond any thing else, that they might be prepared afore hand for such exigents, and resolve to run the most desperate hazard of the losse of any mans favour , or their own lives, that nothing may interrupt their obedience unto him , or intercept the light of his countenance from them. 2. We are to note, that the hatred which is required, hath not reference to the persons specified in my Text, but to such favours and contentments as we may receive from them. The love of Christ will not suffer, much lesse cause us, in any case to neglect the duties, or growe weary of the relations of nature: only thus much Christ expects from us, seeing we may be often driven to that push, that we must either loose him, or the good looks of those whom we account our best friends,

friends, that in comparison of our hopes by the Gospell, we should so hate (that is) by a Hebraisme, neglect or disesteem whatsoever comforts or favours we could expect from them, that without any long pause or deliberation, we may be content to let them goe, and be glad we are so ridd of them, that we may sticke close unto Christ, and be found in him enwrapped in his righteousness. To unfold them yet more distinctly: we may part from that which is dear unto us for the love of God or Christ in two respects.

We may
part
with
what is
dear un-
to us for
the love
of Christ
in 2. re-
spects.

1. As a sacrifice, to wit, when God is glorified by that, which we part with, so *Abraham* was willing to part with *Isaac*, and in this respect might be said to hate him, though do doubt but his bowels yearned most vehemently, even when his hand was fetching the fatall blow, so

so that heroicall mother 2. *Macc.* 7. hated her seaven Sons whom indeed she loved most tenderly, being content to see them all butchered before her eyes with horrible rarity of torments, that they may not disobey the Law, and God might be glorified. 2. As a temptation, when we our selves being severed from it, may glorify God more freely: Thus *Moses* refused to be called the Son of *Pharaohs* daughter, hating the Treasures of *Ægypt* in comparison of the reproach of *Christ*, *Heb.* 11. 26. Thus *Joseph* parted with his Mistressse and all his hopes by his Master, because he would not doe that great wickednesse and sin against God. So that indeed the hatred in my Text is more passive then active, consisting in an humble willingnesse to forgoe any thing, which may be either an

The hatred required in *Christ* disciples is passive more then active.

ac-

acceptable sacrifice unto Christ, or a dangerous temptation from him, in a well composed dislike and disesteem of those things, which our nature counts her jewels, when compared to those glorious invisible rarities, which they may hinder us from. Lastly, in a placide, well tempered contentednesse, upon a small warning to part with them, either one after another, or all of them at a clap, so that we may be sure of the main, so that by letting them go, we may take better hold of Christ Jesus, in whom we are sure to finde with an infinite overplus whatsoever we loose for his sake.

The Do-
ctrine of
the Text.

My text being thus explained, I will contract the pith both of it and it's explication into this doctrine. Whosoever makes account to be the better for his profession of Christ, and to have his

his share in those unvaluable purchases of his passion must prize Christ Jesus, and his hopes by him, farre beyond whatsoever or whomsoever he may most lawfully, and ought most dearly to love in this World, yea farre beyond life it self, and whatsoever contentments may endeare it unto him. To heap up other testimonies, or to goe any farther then my Text for the proof of this doctrine, were to prejudice both our Saviours Authority, he being so plain and peremptory in the point; and your esteem of it, as if you were not by his bare word sufficiently perswaded and convinced of a truth, so much concerning himself and you too, if you do in earnest desire to have any thing to do with him. My labour, I suppose, will be better spent in demonstrating unto you the equity

The equity of
the Do-
ctrine
demon-
strated
by two
reasons.

ty of that, which may seem rigour
in this doctrine, in discovering
unto you what good reasons our
Saviour had to exact so great a
measure and high a pitch of love
from all those who would be par-
takers of his redemption, and
sharers of his merits: Some of
those reasons I will specify and
amplify in two considerations.

1. It will not stand either with
the justice, or wisdom of God
the Father, to loose the glory of
his everlasting mercies in his Son,
by conferring them upon such as
do not perceive and acknowledge
some out-stripping excellency in
them beyond all his temporall
blessings. Indeed it is usuall with
God in his generall providence to
heap his temporall favours upon
such as never think of his love
in dealing thus bountifully with
them; but the reason of that

be

because he can call them in again,
and blow upon them at his plea-
sure; and though he get no glo-
ry for his mercy, whilest he be-
stowes them as blessings, yet he can
be sure to glorify his justice by
turning them into curses: But
now for his everlasting mercies,
those riches of his love in Christ,
he useth not to part with them
so easily: he lets not them go out
of his hands: by his Ministers he
proclaimes and displayes the in-
finite worth and value of them:
if any man be so taken with the
lustre of them, that for joy *Mat.*
3. 44. He goes and sels all that
he hath to buy them, and thinks he
hath a good bargain too, God
secretly seales unto him an ever-
lasting assurance of them by the
pittie of promise, and gives posses-
sion of them at the day of his
death, when all other possessions
leave

Spiritual
blessings
are not so
common
as tem-
porall.

God pre-
sently
gives an
everlast-
ing assu-
rance of
salvation
to all
who love
Christ
sincerely.

leave him. But now if any man think so poorly of them, that either he will not vouchsafe to cheapen them, or if he do think them worth the buying, yet will not come off roundly, and buy them outright with all that he hath. I say it will not stand either with the justice, or wisdom of God the Father, to cast them away upon such prodigious sorts. The reason may be gathered out of our Saviours words, *Mat. 10. 37. He that loveth Father or Mother more then mee is not worthy of mee*: Alas, you will say, no more is he that loveth him infinitely better, then his Father and Mother: yes! such a one is worthy of him, not indeed with such a worthinesse as God may expect, but with such a worthinesse as he in justice may accept; not with such a worthinesse by which he
may

may deserve Christ; for then he would have no need of him, *seeing that worthinesse might as well immediately answere the justice of God without Christ*: but with such a worthinesse as may fit him having need of Christ, and Christ being freely given him, to receive him. What kind of worthinesse is that? it is the worthinesse of Faith working by Love, consisting in a thorow sense of the extreame misery of our greatest happiness without Christ; in a clear perswasion of the incomparable worth of those things which wee are promised in Christ, and in a well advised resolution to do, or suffer any thing that we may be assured of our part in them.

It is as possible to bee justified without Christ, as to perform any thing, which may deserve Christ.

But alas! what worthinesse is there in all this? seeing that whatsoever we can possibly do or suffer for Christ in this life, is not
I 2 worthy

worthy to be compared with that glory which shall be revealed, Rom. 8. 18. I answered, there can be indeed no meritorious worthinesse in all this, but there is an acceptable worthinesse; for by acceptance hee is worthy of whatsoever God does for him, who in some good measure understands the worth of his benefits, and takes them to heart, desiring & endeavouring to give him all the glory which he intended for himself in bestowing them. The principall thing God intends in doing good unto any of his creatures is the glory of his goodnesse, if therefore his creature acknowledge his goodnesse proportionably in his benefits, desiring to value them all single at that high price, and in comparifon one above another proportionably as the donor would have he should, he restores unto God that which

Ther's a
twofold
worthi-
nesse Ac-
ceptable
and Me-
ritorious.

he

he aimed at in his benefits, and is worthy of them with that worthinesse which a Creator may expect from a creature: seeing an infinite Creator, which had need of nothing, cannot expect any thing from a finite creature, having nothing but what he first bestowed upon it, but the glory of his benefits.

It is not required by God that any creature should deserve his gifts.

Now to draw neerer unto the point: the greatest matter containing in it is infinite variety of wonders, which God from all eternity hath contrived by his wisdom, compassed by his power, bestowed by his goodnesse upon mankind to get himself as it were an infinite masse of glory, which should suffice him through all eternity, was the sending of his own Sonne in our nature, on our behalfe to satisfie his justice. This was that astonishing project, where-

The Redemption of man is the

most ad-
mirable
worke
of God.

wherewith that invisible Lord
blessed for ever intended in the
fullest, compleatest measure to
glorify all his Attributes at once,
and to make himself farre more
admirable then he was in the
creation and government of the
World. This was that mystery
which was hidden from ages and
generations, in which God would
make known the riches of his
glory, *Col. 1. 26.* Which holy
men for many ages together sa-
luted as farre off, and rejoyced to
see, though it were through a
cloud, which the *Angels themselves*
desire *παραύλου* most heedfully
to pride into, *1 Pet. 1. 10.* out
of their heavenly places beholding
in the Church the manifold wisdom
of God, *Ephes. 3. 10.* This being
so, whosoever is admitted to see
what is the fellowship of the mystery
which from the beginning of the
world

world hath been hid in God, v. 9.
 If he be so caught up with admiration of it, that he grow presently into a leathing of all his other happinesse in comparison of this; if at the sight of such a concourse of wonders, he be so ravished out of himself, that he care not what become of what he most doted on before, so that he may get his part in that fellowship; I say, such a one is worthy of Christ, because he gives God that glory which Christ meant to procure him: and therefore it will stand both with his wisdom and justice, to allot such a one his portion out of those *unsearchable riches of Christ*, Ep. 3. 8. But on the contrary: whosoever is admitted to the sight of the fellowship of the same mystery, if he can espy no such extraordinary excellency in it, but that he may keep himself as he is

and hold fast what he hath ; if he can discerne no such superlative worth in it , as may call in his thoughts from all other matters , and command their attendance upon it self ; if his affections continue still glued unto such trash and mucke , as they were fastened on before ; in a word , if he satisfy himself with such grosse conceits as these , that sure the things which are offered us in Christ are excellent things , but offered upon very hard tearmes , and therefore , perhaps other matters may be better for us for the present , that those are matters of another World , and would be good for us when we are dead , but in the meantime it's best for us to make as much of our selves as we can , and by Gods mercy we may at length have our part in those matters , as well as those that keep most stirre about

They
who will
not take
Christ on
those
tearments
he is
offered,
shall ne-
ver enjoy
him.

about them, (I say) such stupid
sots are so strangely unworthy of
Christ, that God cannot doe them
any good : his wisdom and his
justice will not suffer him : It
would infinitely lesse become his
wisdom to prostitute such trea-
sures unto the trampling of such
swine, then it would become the
wisdom of a man to give chil-
dren Diamonds to play with, who
will be better pleased with cher-
ry-stones; or to feed hounds with
the most costly dainties, which had
rather be doing upon carrion. It's
likewise impossible for his Justice
to bestow his chiefest, choicest mer-
cies upon such brutes, as wil scarce
take them for mercies, being not
thoroughly perswaded that they
have any need of them; did I say,
it will not stand with the Justice
of God to bestow his principall
mercies where they are thus bru-

They
offer the
greatest
affront
to God,
who
scorne
his love.

tishly undervalued! nay, he that thus undervalues them must not carry it away so: the Justice of God will not suffer him to let that man passe, without the most heavy and fearfull plagues that his omnipotency can inflict, because it is the greatest affront and most intollerable despight, that such worms can offer his impassible majesty, thus as much as in us lies, to besoot his wisdom: , and even scorne his love, in that where he thought to doe us most good and himself most glory, we forsooth can see no such great need of that, or extraordinary reason for this.

Nay you will say, but we may value Gods love in Christ very highly, albeit we esteem some few things, which our nature hath taken special liking unto before it? Not such matter: He that esteemes

seemes the dearest things he hath,
suppose his own life, but in the
least degree above it, undervalues
it as much in effect, as he that
makes no account of it at all: would
any man say that he esteemed a
pearle, who should preferre a bar-
ley-corne before it: yet there is
some proportion between a bar-
ley-corne and a pearle, but none
at all between our temporall life
and that exceeding weight of
glory, treasured up for us by
Gods love in Christ. O this love
of God in not sparing his own
Son for our redemption, is so full
of bottomlesse, fathomlesse my-
steries, it is in such transcendent
excesse infinite, that those multi-
tudes of his blessings in our crea-
tion and preservation, inestima-
ble too in themselves wherewith
לֵב יוֹם יוֹם בְּיוֹם יוֹם day by day be-
loadeth us, Psal. 68. v. 19. (take
them

them altogether) are not worth
 the talking off in comparison of
 this, nor as wee say to be named
 the same day with it; O this sen-
 ding of Christ to dye for us, when
 we were yet sinners, was that spe-
 ciall, royall present, wherewith the
 King of heaven would commend
 his love unto us, as the Apostle
 excellently expresseth it, *Rom.*
5. 8. In this laith Saint John I.
4. 9. was manifested the love of
God towards us, that he sent his
onely begotten Son into the World,
that we might live through him.
 Manifested in this, Why? in what
 not? so it is in every bit of bread
 we eate, in every sup of aire we
 take in. O but the noblest bles-
 sings of this life are such poor cur-
 tessies in comparison of what we
 hope for by Christ, that Gods love
 though most eminent too, doe's
 scarce appear in them, being eclipsed
 sed

fed by that most orient and everlasting blaze of his love in Christ.

Wherefore to conclude my first consideration: it is no wonder if the Justice of God, which is to see that his Glory receive no damage; require that our esteem of this his greatest mercy, which himself values so farre above all his other mercies, should so farre exceed our esteem of any other matters though otherwise most excellent in themselves and dear unto us; that our very esteem of them may be but a disesteem and a hatred, if compared to our esteem of his love in Christ.

Confid. 2. If a man professe never so much love unto Christ, if he doe indeed preferre him before never so many conveniences of this life, yet if he love but any one thing in the world never so little better then he doth Christ,

The second Reason.

of this world, being a shadow he

he doth him in effect, as much dishonour, as he that never looks after him at all. Thus much I intimated before; but what I did but touch upon, and in reference to God the Father, I will now amplify with speciall references unto God the Son. It is all one, as I said before, not to esteeme a pearl at all, and to esteeme it lesse worth then a barley-corne: in like manner, though we preferre Christ before never so many profits and pleasures, yet if there remaine behind one darling contentment, which we are resolved to keep whatsoever may become of his glory or our interest in him; we doe in the issue esteeme him not at all, because we still wittingly value him below that, which is infinitely worse then dung in comparison of him. When a saleable commodity is offered upon reasonable price, we use to say,

It is all one not to esteeme Christ at all and to preferre one though but one contentment before him.

say, that if it be not worth that, it's worth just nothing: Now our part in Christ is so infinitely over-
worth any thing that we can possibly give for it, that by farre better reason we may say, that he that thinks it not cheap bought with all that he hath, even to his last breath, indeed thinks it worth nothing at all. Let a woman love her Husband better then a million of men, yet if shee love but any one man in the World better then her Husband, he will give her but little thanks for loving him above so many others.

But to amplify this point more distinctly, let us briefly consider that transcendent pitch of love we owe first, unto the benefits of Christ; secondly, unto his person. All those inestimable benefits, which we make account of by Christ, may be reduced to
2. heads.

2. heads. 1. a ranfome 2. an inheritance. The ranfome is from horours & those torments, which are infinite for smart, variety, and duration, which we have all deserved a thousand times over; and therefore the case being thus with us, though we looked for nothing but such a ranfome by our Saviour, though he had procured us only this, that after this life we should spend eternity in a *Limbus*, unacquainted with any pain or pleasure, yea though he had procured us only the mortality of our souls, that they might perish with our bodies; I say, this alone had been beyond all proportion, better for us then the whole world: seeing what would a thousand Worlds doe us good, if after a while we must be packed out of them all into that place, where we shall everlastingly curse the day

Had the blessings procured by Christ been infinitely lesse then they are, thy had been in estimable.

day that ever we were borne or made reasonable creatures. But now that besides all this, we make first account for an inheritance by him, an *inheritance immortall, undefiled, reserved in heaven for us*, seeing we expected to be made *heires with Christ in that glory, which he had with his Father before the beginning of the World*, of that glory, the least sparke of which, if visible to bodily eyes, would shame all the beauty, pompe, and bravery of the world, and whatsoever the Magnifico's of the earth are proud of, it is a stupidity worse then any madnesse to conceive, we esteem sufficiently of such glorious hopes, if upon deliberate choyce we make much but of any one indearement of this life, which may any way hinder our assurance of them. 2. For our love unto the person of Christ,

equity

Wee
should
love
Christs
person
more en-
tirely
then his
benefits.

equity requires that we should love him with a love yet more overtopping then either our ransom or inheritance; and therefore it will be yet a more intolerable extremity of madnesse, to imagine we love him with an acceptable degree of affection, as long as we dare to bring the most lovely object, that we can pick out of the store house of nature, within the compasse of a comparison with him. I say, reason requires that we should love his person more entirely then his benefits, that we should preferre his glory before eternall life itself. Our Saviour is contented that our fear of misery, and desire of happinesse, should first enter us into the love of him, that till we know him better we should love him onely for our own sakes and his benefits, but after that he hath

sent

sent his spirit to expound the mystery of his love unto us more clearly, to make us lay to heart not onely what he hath purchased for us, but also how dear the purchase cost him, how though *he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich*, as the Apostle passionately delivers it, 2 Cor. 8. 9. *how being every way equall with God*, Phil. 2. 7. *ἐκένωσεν*, he was fain to empty and strip himself as it were, of all his royalty, that he might compasse these great matters for us, for whom he it had not the least reason to doe the least good: when his spirit hath effectually melted our hearts with these considerations, we shall perceive our loving him chiefly for our own salvation, to be somewhat too grosse and mercenary love, being not much different from

It is a mercenary love to Christ. love

chiefly
or our
own sal-
vation.

from that of a woman, who loves
her joynture better then her hus-
band; or that of a Son, who loves
his Father chiefly for his patrimo-
ny. And though hitherto we have
loved Christ onely because we
hope to get by him, yet now, that
we know what *the kisses of his*
mouth mean, that which we prin-
cipally love in him is his love; and
having before loved the giver for
the gift, by a kind of regresse in
our affection, we henceforth strive
to love the gift for the giver. But
this point, though many of Gods
Children know it to be most rea-
sonable, and have found it most
comfortable, yet I know it will
seem to many both too rigide and
too curious, and therefore I dis-
misse it.

All that hath been delivered in
my second consideration may be
summed up in this excellent con-
clusion.

ves clusion. So much onely we do
 us love Christ, as we love him more
 ves then any thing else besides, though
 no never so lovely: 1. Because wee
 ve have infinitely more reason to love
 we him, then it is possible we should
 nat have to love any thing else: and
 his therefore it is not to be accounted
 in love unto him, if we can afford as
 nd much and more to something
 or else: 2. Because if we love but
 in one thing better then we do him,
 ve that one thing may force us to
 ut despight, forsake, and betray him
 ds as accursedly, as if we preferred a
 ea hundred things before him: yea,
 oft he that resolvedly preferres but
 ill one thing before his communion
 nd with Christ, will quickly be en-
 if treated by his own heart to pre-
 ferre more. He therefore that
 in would certainly know how much
 be he loves his blessed Saviour, that
 n would judge exactly of the mea-
 n. sure

So much
 only wee
 love
 Christ as
 we love
 him bet-
 ter then
 any thing
 else.

sure of his love unto him, must not
 do it by feeling the *pulse* as it were,
 or calculating the degrees of his
 affection unto him; but by com-
 paring his affection unto Christ,
 with his affections unto other
 matters, and considering how far
 that hath got the start of these,
 and what overplus it hath be-
 yond them all in the comparison;
 for so much and no more doth he
 indeed love Christ. For it deserves
 observation: that we cannot judge
 of an affection by its single exer-
 cises, what it does alone by it self;
 but onely when it is brought
 within the lists, when it's put to
 wrestle for the mastery with o-
 ther affections in the same heart.
 Where it comes to passe that of
 two affections of the same kinde,
 the weaker may prove the stron-
 ger, if seated in a heart, where as
 weake it is, it hath the soveraignty
 over

over all the other affections, proportionally weaker then it self; & the stronger may prove weaker, if it dwell in such a heart, wherein it is overmatched with some one at least stronger then it self. Did I love Christ Jesus with as eminent degree of love as ever did the most resolute Martyr, yet were it possible that I should love any endearment of this life never so little beyond that pitch, my love would be as good as none at all; yea the same measure of love which made him a glorious Martyr, would not keep me from being an accursed Apostate; seeing that if I were put to it, as he was, that I must either renounce my Saviour, or my other contentment, this would hold me so fast, that it would make me most desperately let him go: and this would be, not because my love un-

to

to Christ was in it self weaker then the Martyrs; I supposed the contrary: but because my affection unto something else was stronger then any affection in the Martyr, and too strong to be overmastered by my love unto Christ.

But here some may put in a foolish question; though a Disciple of Christ must not love any thing better then his Master, yet may he not love some things as well? I answer, the conceit is impossible. First, Because it is an impossibility, that for any continuance our affections should bee settled in an equall size upon two objects, which commonly fall crosse one to the other, and may ever and anon be brought in opposition one against the other. Now whatsoever we love besides Christ, unlesse it be in subordination unto him, either actually, when we par-

particularly think of it and intend it; or habitually, in the generall constant purpose of our minds, we love it in opposition to him either explicite and direct, or implicite and interpretative, as the Schooles speak, that is such a neglect of him as he will interpret opposition. All this we learn from himself, who hath pronounced it impossible, that one man should *serve two masters*; and his reason is, *he must needs hate the one and love the other*, Math. 6. 24. 2. Wee may note, that love and the rest of the affections may be considered two wayes. 1. Physically, as they are qualities in the soul. 2. Morally, in respect of their motives and other morallizing circumstances. Now suppose it were possible, that we should love Christ and some worldly contentment with the very same degree of affection,

K

fection,

If we
love any
content-
ment e-
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Christ
we love
Christ
indeed
farre lesse
then that
content-
ment.

fection, although these loves would be equall, considered naturally as qualities, yet considered morally, our love of Christ would be farre lesse then our love of the other contentment: seeing our love of that, upon small reasons, would be as great as our love of Christ upon the greatest reasons that ever were, or ever can be, to observe love. Thus in two considerations have you heard explained, confirmed, and amplified, this main doctrine, whosoever he be, that makes account to be the better for his profession of Christ.

Before I descend to application I suppose it expedient to vindicate this fundamentall point from some exceptions, which it may be charged with by such as do not, or will not understand it.

In the first place, it may be objected,

jected, if none can get the rich
 pearle in the parable, but he that
 will give all he hath for it: if none
 can have his part in Christ, but
 he that prizeth it above his life,
 and is ready to buy it with what-
 soever is dear unto him, what
 means then that Evangelicall pro-
 clamations, *Esa. 55. 1. Ho! every
 one that thirsteth come yee to the
 waters, and he that hath no money:
 come and buy milk without money,
 and without price?* What means
 that nuptiall invitation, *Rev. 22.
 The spirit and the bride say come,
 and let him that heareth say come,
 and whosoever will, let him take of
 the water of life freely?* What! are
 we invited and entreated to drink
 on free cost of the water of life,
 and yet must we venture our lives
 for it, & breake through a whole
 host of Philistines for it, as the
 Worthies of David did for the

The
 point is
 vindica-
 ted from
 some ex-
 ceptions.

waters of Bethel, 2 *Sam.* 23. Are we made beleeve that Christ is given us freely, and yet must we buy him, and buy him with all that we have? I answere. 1. That proclamation in the Prophet, and invitation in the Apocalyps are not to be so understood, as if God required nothing on their parts, who shall partake of his promises in Christ, but only to step forth and challenge them. The sense and scope of those places is this, whereas worldly commodities, though never so vain and transitory, cannot be gotten without price, so that he that is pennyleffe must be content to go without them: those heavenly and everlasting commodities are attainable to all sorts of men, as well to beggars as to Princes; poverty can hinder no man from buying them, hee that hath not a penny may come and drink

drink as freely of the waters of life, as he that hath coffers full. As God expects from us whatsoever we have, so that which we have for him shall serve the turne, though it be never so little, though we have nothing but the shirt on our backs; but our naked, diseased carcases, yet if we are willing to give them for Christ, they shall be sufficient pay. God turns away no chapman because he cannot give enough, but only because he will not give what he can. For if there be first a willing minde, God accepts *according to that a man hath, and not according to that a man hath not*, as it is spoken in another case, 2 Cor. 8. 12. 2. When we are said to buy the pearle, to buy Christ with all that we have, such like speeches are in no wise to be understood properly, but Parabolically; for in propriety of

speech , when we forsake all to winne Christ, we do not lay down any price unto God for him, who hath given him for us all , and offered him to every one of us most freely ; only we ridde our selves of such things as may hinder us from receiving him being freely given. If one should offer me handfuls of gold, I for the present having my hands full of clay , I should quickly be rid of the clay that I may finger the go'd , yet I do not pay him for his gold with my clay, but only prepare my self to receive it. In like manner , there being an infinitely greater disproportion between Christ and the most precious commodities that we can forgoe for him , then there is between gold and clay , when we dismember our selves of any thing that we may make room for Christ , we do not purchase him,
but

but prepare to entertain him coming of his own accord unto us.

2. But is it so in earnest, will some say? must every man that will be the better for Christ, be willing to loose his own life for him? This is worse then all the rest: why then, upon the point, none can be saved but Martyrs. I answer, we may safely affirme that none are saved but Martyrs; Martyrs either actually or habitually; having faith enough to encourage, & love to constrain them to be Martyrs, if the honour of their professi^{on} should require it. If this assertion make any mans ears to tingle, I know not why the hearing of my Text should not be as offensive unto him, or the reading of divers other speeches of our Saviour, requiring a resolved disesteem and contempt of life in any man whosoever he be; that dares to set his hand to

whether
any can
be saved
but Mar-
tyrs.

his plough, or seriously set his face towards heaven.

There is a Popish scribler not worth the naming in a pulpit, who would perswade us ; that these speeches of our Saviour are not precepts of necessity unto all that shall be saved by him , but onely counsels of perfection to such , as will not be contented to be door-keepers in heaven , but ayme at some higher place. For my part, I cannot expresse how injurious I conceive this glosse, as well to our Saviours person, as to his doctrine. But if any man present, (to set his own heart at quiet,) be willing to be of this fellowes mind , I leave him three things to pause upon.

1. Our Saviour did not speak thus much only to some select, forward men , only to his specially Disciples, but as it is in the verse precedent , *there went great multitudes*
af-

after him, and he turned & said un-
to them, If any man, &c. But per-
haps, though he addresse his dis-
course to them altogether, yet he
intended it not to each of them
single. No! what then mean the
first words of my Text, *If any man*
&c. what means the conclusion of
his discourse, *Vers. 33. So likewise*
whosoever he be of you, that for-
saketh not all that he hath, he cannot
be my Disciple. 2. The considera-
tions which shew the equity of
those conditions required by our
Saviour, the reasons inducing him
to require so great a measure of
love, as you have heard before
equally concern every man; and
therefore there is no reason why
we should imagine, that our Sa-
viour proposed these hard terms
only to some few, and not to all
that would have any interest in
him. 3. Contempt of life in com-

parison of a communion with Christ, is most universally requisite in all sorts of men. 1. Because the Church never enjoyes such a calme, but a terrible storm may unexpectedly dash it away; and therefore there is no man, though born in the most peaceable time of the Gospell, but ere the glasse of his life be run out, he may be overtaken with a fiery triall. 2. Yea, there is no professor of the Gospell, though he live and dy during the publike tranquillity of it, yet he may privately be brought to that plunge, that he must either hazard his life, or else in some fearfu'l, horrible manner against his conscience dishonour Christ Jesus. 3. Many may take away our lives, which cannot take away our other contentments, as Popish Affascinati have deprived Kings of their lives, when they could

could not of their Kingdoms. It is certain, that whosoever cares not for his own life, is master of another mans, and by consequent, of any mans religion, that loves his life better then he doth it: How easy were it for a Russian, that had no religion of his own, to pull such a one into a corner, and with a naked blade to make him forswear his religion, as often as he pleased; yea if the trick were in use, such a one might be robbed of his religion upon the high way, seeing any man that were so disposed with a Pistol at his brest, might make him deliver up his faith, with as much hast as his purse.

3. It may be replied, if every follower must love him more then his own life, then it seems that the weakest Christian, if indeed a Christian, must love him as much
as

as the most renowned Apostles, seeing the best of them all could love him no more then so, for *greater love then this hath no man, that he lay down his life for his friend*, witnesse Christ Jesus himself, *Jo. 15. 13.* It seems likewise, that all must have an equall portion of faith; both which consequences palpably contradict both Scripture and experiences I answer first, without question all that shall be saved must be saved by the same faith, *viz.* by faith of the same nature, though not in the same quantity. Now that which breeds the mistake in this objection, is a conceit, that to love Christ more then our lives proceeds not from the nature of saving faith simply considered, but from some eminent degree of it, which conceit is erroneous. For it is very observable, that the nature
of

of faith, if true and saving, be the degree of it never so small, necessarily includes thus much, it being an assent unto all Scripture revelations, especially unto the Gospell promises, as most true and good in themselves, and farre better in the choice then any profits or pleasures in the world, yea then life or whatsoever may sweeten it unto us. Whence an incomparable writer of our own, who hath dived profoundly into the nature of justifying faith, hath waved the words of David, *Psal. 63. Thy loving kindnesse is better then life*, into his compleat definition of that faith, whereby the just doe live.

2. Though all the Disciples of Christ must assent to so much by their faith, and expresse if need be, so much by their love, yet according as those tastes and relishes of heaven, imprinted in their souls by the

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the spirit, upon which the assent of faith, and fervency of love are grounded, are more or lesse lively and pleasant, the faith and love of Christians admit sundry degrees and measures; but not properly in regard of their esteem of the object, (for all, as I have shewed, must esteem it better then life) but in respect of the radication & settling of this esteem in themselves: so that howsoever all faithfull Christians judge and esteem their hopes by Christ to be better then life, yet they may be more or lesse in their judgment; and those apprehensions which cause this esteem, may be more or lesse cleer and distinct. 3. Tis true, that to dye for the profession of Christ, is the greatest possible expression of love unto him; for the matter of it, there may be great diversity, and accordingly severall degrees of faith

faith and love my be expressed by it. Amongst so many thousands as have been crowned with martyrdom, in Primitive and latter times, no doubt but there was infinite variety of degrees of faith & love, all which had but one common expression for the matter; but for the manner of it, some laid down their lives more cheerfully and triumphantly, rejoycing that it was given to them not only to believe, but also to suffer: others with more deliberation, staggering, and reluctancy: some with *Peter* denied Christ divers times, before they would dye for him, recanted, abjured, and run through a hundred of base fights before they would come to the stake; others behaved themselves more honourably and heroically, and being glad of such speedy conveyance to heaven, died with a kind

kind of Angelicall Majesty.

To draw towards a conclusion: if any honest tender heart, which uses to tremble at the word, & to mourn for its own infirmities, be brought into dumps by this doctrine, causing it to think thus with it self; if every one that loves Christ to any purpose, must love him better then life, and be able to dye for him, then sure all my love unto him is nothing worth. When I am in my best moods, his loving kindnesse is dearer unto me then thousands of gold and silver, and I am of *Dauids* mind, that it is *better then life*; but yet if my life were in question for it, I know not what wou'd become of me, sure I should never hold out, but flinch most shamefully. For comfort and direction unto such a soul, I commend these considerations. 1. This feare of
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flinching is a good signe, that thou wouldest not flinch for fear: you know what *Peters* loud protestation (*though all men forsake thee yet will not I*) came to not long after; you know the story of *D. Pendleton*, or you may read it in *M. Fox*: unlesse thy life were exceeding dear unto thee, it would be no such great testimony of thy love unto him, to part with it for his sake; unlesse death were very terrible, Martyrdome would not be either such an acceptable sacrifice unto God, or glorious wonder amongst men. To fear Martyrdome, yea and to pray against it with submission unto Gods will, is warranted by our Saviours own example, when he prayed so earnestly, that if it were possible, the Cup might passe away from him, but still with submission unto his fathers pleasure. That place concerning

cerning our Saviour, *Heb. 5. 7.* is very remarkable, *who in the dayes of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto him, that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.* I stand not upon the words in that *he feared*, for in indeed the construction of the words *αὐτὸς ἠκούσθη*, is very uncertain; that which I especially note, is, that it is said here, our Saviour *was heard*: how was he heard? Mark how, and thence will spring a second branch of comfort: His Father *heard him*, not in removing the Cup from him, but in strengthening him to drink it with victory: so art thou sure to be heard, if thou prayest as he did: either the Cup shall be removed from thee, or sweetned unto thee. Remember withall, that God is never

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ver more for us , then when we are most for him ; that his glory lies at stake as well as thy life ; and that he is more curious of that , then thou canst be of this. *God is faithfull who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. 10. 13.* Remember that thy Saviour hath had experience of all the amazements and horrors of death, when he suffered it for thee , and therefore cannot forget both to pitty and succour thee , when thou art to suffer it for him : *for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted , he is able to succour them that are tempted , as the Apostle sweetly infers , Heb. 2. 18.*

Lastly , let me commend this caution unto the trembling soul ;
Anxious distrustfull care for the
future,

future, in matters of the soul, is more dishonourable and displeasing unto God, then in matters of the body Remember therefore thy Saviours advice, *care not for to morrow, let that care for it self.* Afflict not thy self with such sad supposals, what if *Queen Maries* dayes should come again? what if I should be brought before such a fellow as *Bonner*? remember thy Saviours reason for his advice, *sufficient for the day is the evill thereof.* Which as it is too true for matters of this life, so it is much more true in businesse of our spirituall life. If thou art indeed entred into a covenant with God; if thou hast seriously and advisedly resolved to live the rest of thy time in the flesh, by the faith of the Son of God who hath loved thee, and given himself for thee; if thou art indeed one, who knows what an in-

infinite, endlesse, unwearied diligence is required to a constant, close walking with God; why then, thou hast every day, every hour, omissions and commissions to look unto, thou hast continuall swarmes of thoughts, words, and actions, most warily, & precisely to watch over, thou must tread every step as nicely and gingerly, as if thou wentest amongst snares, and walkedst upon pinnacles, thou must ever and anon chain up thy beloved affections shorter, & deale roughly with those lusts, which perhaps are as dear unto thee as thy life. What! hast thou thus much businesse every day, and hast thou time to make suppositions for the future, and to torment thy self with presages? *Let to morrow care for it self*; abstain from fleshly lusts, which fight against thy soul, and most dangerously in
times

times of peace : stand upon thy guard against thy sins of daily incursion, against such temptations as are incident to thy present condition, in simplicity of heart resign thy self up unto him, that hath loved thee, and given himself for thee, and then be confident, *that neither life nor death, neither things present, nor things to come, shall ever be able to separate thee from him :* this being most certain, that he that does indeed live by faith, hath that in him, which, if need should be, will enable him to dye in it, and for it.

But what reason had I then at this time to trouble mens heads with such a thorny discourse of Martyrdome ? I answered. 1. The habit of Martyrdome, as I have shewed, is included in the most fundamentall principle of Christianity, love of Christ better then

our selves, self resignation or deniall, and therefore they deserve no answer but silence, who shall think a discourse of it at any time to be harsh and unseasonable.

2. As the Prophet Ezekiel forewarned the Jewes. *We have had mischief upon mischief, and rumour upon rumour*, and if mischief and rumours continue and multiply upon us; as fast as they have done of late, the dayes may be sooner upon us, then we are aware, when there may be too much occasion to practise this point and no time to Preach it. The Lord open our eyes, and change our hearts, the Lord of his mercy order matters for us, above all that we are able to aske or think, contrary to the cry of our sins, contrary to probabilities, that the event may prove such discourses unseasonable.

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large application of the main do-
ctrine, branched into diverse uses
but that, if God give leave, I shall
ere long be the exercise of another
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